No. 325 (New Series), Vol. 7. June 11, 1938

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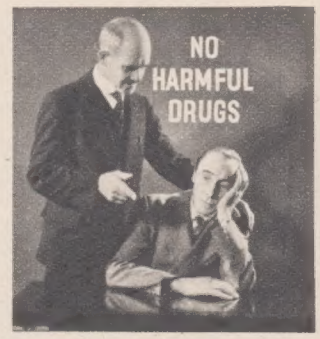

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THE PASSING SHOW
No. 325 Vol. 7
JUNE 11, 1938

"Go eat," he yelled, sagging lower all over. "Keep away from me," he yelled. "I'm a business man in trouble and can't stand pleasure-loving nincompoops," he yelled

PLEASURE BEFORE BUSINESS

According to Henry Bogle, the best thing to do when you're fired is to go fishing—if you're that way inclined. That's what he did when Ajax Preserving missed the cherry crop, but then his catch proved right for once

BY HAROLD TITUS

ILLUSTRATED BY CLIXBY WATSON

JOE, it was just a toss-up that morning whether I'd start for Oregon to brine cherries or go to jail for mayhem.

Since the day I went to work for Ajax Preserving, old J. B. McKay, the production manager, had been in my hair. He'd ridden me and badgered and nagged me, day in and month out; he'd seemed to single me out as the guy to sit on and yet Mr. Lingle, the president, had picked me out for the Oregon brining—which, everybody agreed, meant he had me in mind for something in the new coast branch Ajax is opening next year—and J. B. had to take me.

He had to take me and you'd have thought he'd have called it quits, but the minute he saw my luggage his little, watery eyes lit up as though he'd found something he'd quit hoping for.

"What's that?" he asked, pointing to my rod case.

"Rods," I said. "Fly rods. I thought I might ——"

"Ah!" he said, tickled pink. "Ah-ha!" he crowed. "Little fishing trip, eh? Little pleasure before business? That the idea?"

It got my goat. I'd stood him for three years, but that was too much. There I was, all hyped up over the chance to show what I'd learned about the maraschino cherry business; hadn't slept a wink the night before, see, planning what a whale of a job I'd do to prove Mr. Lingle was right in considering me for the coast and then I draw that. It was like a kick in the stomach.

Honest, Joe, taking my tackle was an afterthought, nuts as I've always been about fly fishing. The last thing, I packed it up on the bet I might get in an odd Sunday with the Oregon trout, and there was J. B. acting as if my rods were evidence of window-peeping or something. Somehow, I held my head and my tongue and told myself I'd stick it out and shake loose from J. B. and then I'd unload on him. I had three years of storing away new names and cuss words to fall back on. I'd tell it to him harder and longer than anybody on earth had ever been burned before, I promised myself. Waiting was hard, I told myself, but it was going to be worth it. Plenty worth it, mister.

I suppose, even then, somewhere in the Arctic the weather was mixing up a rain for Oregon, and it's a sure thing that a certain big trout was lying in his pool here in Michigan. Those items were going to give me my chance, and that Pennsylvania landscape sure would have looked a lot drearier than it did if I'd dreamed I was going to let that chance go by when it came along.

You know, Joe, when we got out of college, jobs were jobs. I landed with Ajax and liked the maraschino business, spite of it seeming as if J. B. took me on to have somebody handy to insult. I dug in and got good, if I do say so, but being good didn't seem to do me any good, see? The better I got, the harder J. B. rode me. When he couldn't bawl me for mistakes he jeered at me for being young, and sneered at my college degree, and razzed me about my light hair, and for being tall and thin. Things like that.

Now, you've got to hand it to J. B. for being a production man. His methods are hard to beat and yet, three different times I got hunches for little changes that shaved costs, and what did he do? He just snorted and hooted and put my ideas into use with never an aye, yes nor no. No credit at all, see? Just seemed bent on raw-hiding me off the pay roll.

But when Mr. Lingle picked me for the Oregon brining I figured J. B. would realise I was anyhow being considered for the coast set-up, and that running me out was no dice and at least let me alone.

(*please turn over*)

Then to have him take a fresh tack before we pulled out. . . . Boy!

Well, we landed without any blows, and the cherries were just starting to ripen, which is how we like 'em. Our brine isn't salt, understand. It has a sulphur base and bleaches and firms the fruit. We put two hundred and fifty pounds in a barrel and ship to Pennsylvania for pitting, colouring, flavouring and all the rest.

I rode the job from the start and kept the crew sweet spite of having J. B. around, and knew my costs were away below any other year and could see myself going to glory, when the rain hit.

Yes, sir, Joe ; rain hit us.

Ever watch your factory burn down with the insurance lapsed? Ever see a run start on your bank? Ever have a dam you've built your reputation on go out? Well, neither have I, but I've seen our cherries split, with the order books drunk, and that's enough. Generally Oregon has fine weather for picking, but this year she rained. With Ajax two thousand barrels from home, she rained.

She sets in to rain, and the cherries split, and rot starts. It was something more than pitiful, feller.

Now, when it threatened rain I checked with the forecast and told J. B. what we could expect. I told him we might be sunk, and better try to copper the bet with Michigan stock.

"Does being an expert fisherman qualify you as a weather prophet?" he snarled, but when the first report of split cherries came in he beat it out, hell-for-leather, to have a look and before noon he was back wringing his hands.

"It's all off!" he moans. "We won't brine another barrel!" he sobs and walks up and down, muttering.

"Your pleasure trip's over!" he snapped, the pouches under his eyes getting bigger. "Your Oregon fishing's finished!" he roared. "Vacation days are ended!" he yelled and wrung his hands some more.

"Lay off this crew!" he wailed. "Shut up this dump!" he whined. "Load those barrels!" he cried and put both hands to his head. "I got one of my sick headaches coming on," he whimpered. "I'll phone in from the hotel, if I live to get there."

Maybe remembering how right I'd been made his head ache. I certainly hoped so. Gee, how I hated that man then!

I got to the hotel myself in less than two hours; but even so, Pete Donovan, of Majestic Fruits, was coming out with his bags. I heard him tell the taxi driver to get to the airport, and knew Majestic was doing what we should have done. Getting into Michigan as fast as they could to grab off what was left, the Michigan crop being just a little later than Oregon's.

You see, most of the Royal Anns are grown in California or the Northwest, but Michigan has a lot of sweets along with the top tonnage of sour cherries, which make swell stock for the cheaper maraschino grades. We'd been using Michigan sours, but had stuck to Oregon for sweets. When Oregon cracked, though, that left only Michigan, and what a scramble there was going to be!

When I got to his room J. B. was just getting Mr. Lingle on the wire. His voice wasn't very strong, account of his headache, and he had to tell the boss three times that the deal was off. Then I heard a lot of tinny noises in the receiver, which was topside throwing a fit.

"Well, I didn't make it rain!" J. B. whined. . . . "Yes, I'll phone Michigan now," he whimpered. "I dunno what good it'll do," he wailed and put down the phone so he could wring, anyhow, one hand.

He felt rotten, all right. He had a wet towel over his head and told me to get the co-operative in Traverse City for him.

It took quite a while, because every other maraschino house in the country was calling that Traverse City co-op, which controls the biggest cherry pool in the East. By the time I got connected J. B. was just green with his head, which didn't grieve me any.

"Tell 'em we want two thousand barrels of hard sweets," he gasped. "Tell 'em we'll take the first train east to brine."

That was a joke. It was just a scream, Joe. When I told that co-op manager to reserve two two thousand barrels he just laughed.

"Excuse me," he said, "but there aren't two thousand pounds loose in the region, let alone barrels. Do you want to increase your order for sours?" he said. "We have our canned and frozen markets to take care of and won't be booking many more brine orders."

I relayed that and J. B. sat up and took the phone and burned up the wire. He said we'd get our sweets or that co-op would never sell Ajax another pound of sours. He told him to reserve a brining space on his platform right away because we were catching the first train east, and hung up and lay back sort of writhing.

That made me sick. Not seeing him suffer, but thinking of Ajax. You can't work for a decent firm, Joe, for three years without having it get to be a part of you. Ajax was in trouble for sure, and here was J. B. wasting days when even hours were diamonds.

"Can we chance a train?" I said. "The others are flying."

He lifted his towel and glared up at me, and I could see I'd scored. But give me credit for it? Not that old bozo.

"Oh, so you like to fly!" he whimpered. "So you prefer planes to trains!" he moaned. "Pleasure before business again?" he squealed, and winced at the twinge the squeal gave his head. "Go ahead, then! Get us two places, then," he groaned, and I could have slit his wizzen right there with a clear conscience.

You've got to hand it to J. B. for another thing. His head was giving him fits next day when we could get a plane, and he got air sick to boot, but never complained. Still, he wasn't sick enough to overlook a chance to ride me. Couple hours up we flew over a river and he turned around and sneered :

"Shall we stop and fish a while? Or does it make a difference to you that we can't make full delivery to anybody and that Ajax is trapped?" He lay back in his seat and wrung his hands.

Well, the Chicago sales manager had a car for us and all the dope. The Traverse City co-op was sold out. Majestic had grabbed a few hundred barrels in Southern Michigan, and Great Eastern was picking up scattered lots a little farther north.

"But," he said, "in Traverse City a canner named Wellenburg's got a lot of sweets contracted. He's a queer old dude," he said, "but they're there to be bought, if anybody's man enough."

We made it here to Traverse City before dinner, with J. B. complaining first because I drove so fast, and next because I took so long. Before the boy put down his bags he was on the phone. The Wellenburg office didn't answer and neither did his house.

"You better go eat," he said, opening the door to my room. "Your appetite ought to be good, not realising what goes on," he said and rumpled his grey hair so it stood up and waved. "For anybody who puts pleasure before business, this ought to be a fine time to eat," he said.

A big bozo, J. B. His head's small for the rest of him and he sags a lot. The pouches under his eyes sag and his cheeks sag so his chin makes a *W*, and his paunch is the pendant type. When he's upset his lower lip lops down like an old horse's.

"Go eat!" he yelled, sagging lower all over. "Keep away from me!" he yelled. "I'm a business man in trouble and can't stand pleasure-loving nincompoops!" he yelled.

Eat? I couldn't eat. And not on account of J. B., either. If I hadn't been so upset by one degree over the jam Ajax was in I'd have socked him, but it just seemed as if life wouldn't be worth living unless we got hold of that Wellenburg tonnage, and not even J. B.'s slurs could take my mind off it.

I went downstairs and saw a couple guys going out with waders and fly rods, but that didn't even interest me. I went back to my room like a scared dog crawling away, and heard J. B. phoning.

"Not in, eh?" he asked. "When will he be in?" he asked and waited. . . . "Well, could I reach him anywhere before midnight? . . . What's that? . . . Fishing?" he said, like somebody'd stepped on his corns. "Fishing!" he squawked and slammed up the receiver.

"Hear that?" he yelled, jerking open my door. Must've heard me, see? "Hear that?" he yelled. "This fool Wellenburg's fishing!" he yelled. "Fishing while Rome burns! Fishing!"

As if I was to blame, understand? As if I'd schemed to get our man out of town when we needed him most, see?

I had a nice evening, Joe. I prowled the hotel and heard fishing talk in the grill and didn't even listen. Not then. Later; but not then. You see, evenings in early July they have a big hatch on this Boardman River, and the browns come out and feed and most of the town goes after 'em. Somebody said that the lunkers were all gone; that fishing was rotten; that the biggest fish killed so far was only four pounds and ten ounces. Only four and ten, Joe. Oh, this is a fishing town, but I got no kick out of it then.

J. B. had me out at Wellenburg's cannery before seven o'clock, likely just to have somebody handy to light on. Even so, Wellenburg was there before us. One of these early risers, see?

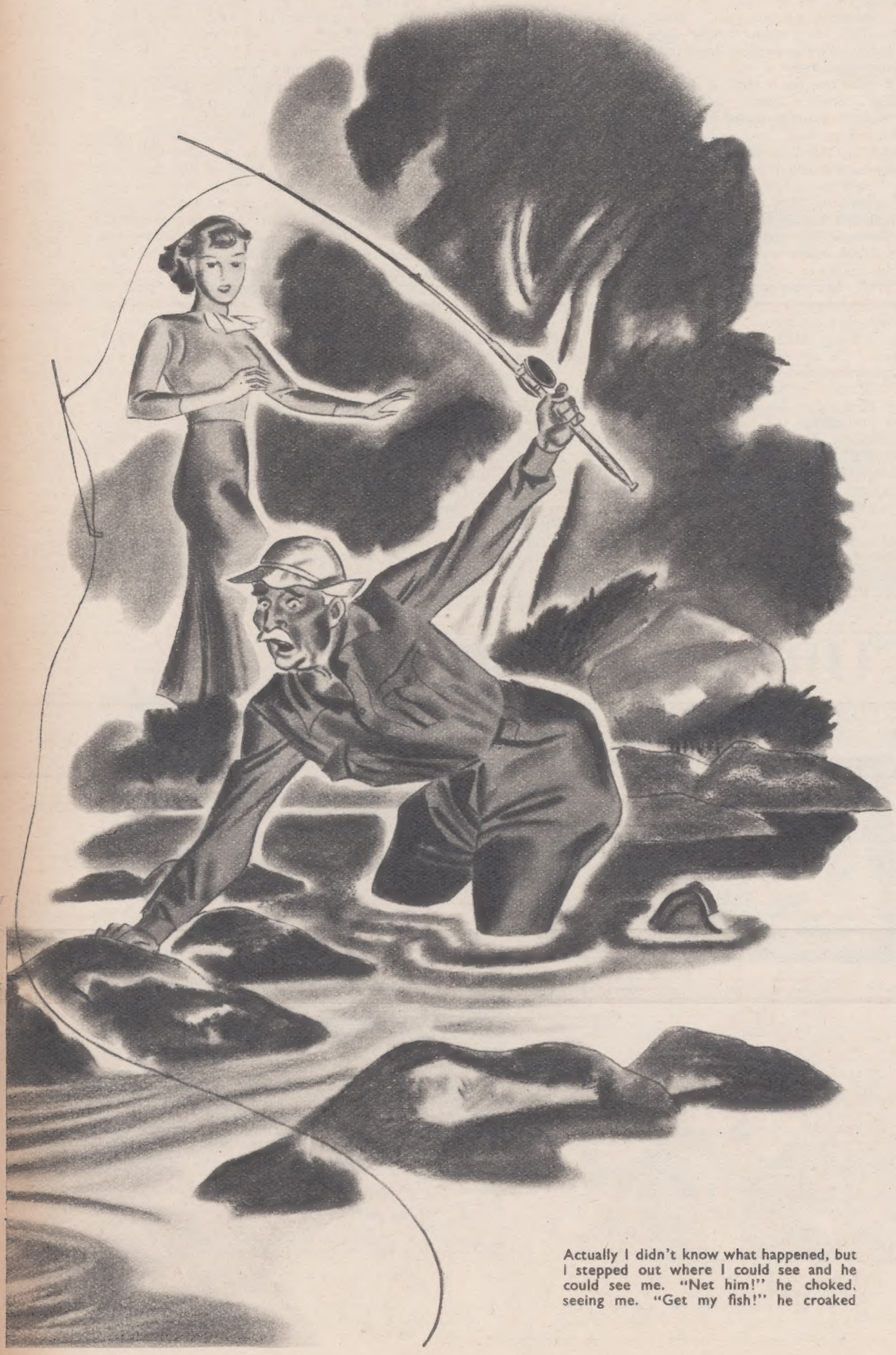
His daughter was there, too, and don't let the old tremolo stop now fool you into thinking she even registered that morning.

It shows how low I was that she didn't register. She's a pip, but it meant nothing to me, then. Not a thing, Joe. Her old man was busy and we had to wait, and J. B. commenced yelling in a whisper what he was going to say, rehearsing his stuff. I didn't even listen. I was busy thinking up new things to tell him if and when we got those cherries brined, and finally he realised I wasn't with him and leaned forward and looked close into my face and then looked where I'd been looking—straight ahead—and saw this Lola.

"When it ain't fishin' it's women, is it?" he hissed and likely would have given me a good long lacing if a little dude hadn't walked in and stood right close to us. He was old and thin and short and stooped, Joe. His face was like old paper and his eyes looked like bright, black buttons. Under his arm he had a creel. . . . Yes, a creel.

"Your pa in, Lola?" he asked.

"He's busy right now," she said, "and these gentlemen——"



Actually I didn't know what happened, but I stepped out where I could see and he could see me. "Net him!" he choked. seeing me. "Get my fish!" he croaked

A private office door opened and cut her off and two guys came out. One was Wellenburg, I was going to find out. The other was Pete Donovan, of Majestic. I'd last seen him in Oregon; the day before, he'd been in Southern Michigan. And here he was, having beaten us to Wellenburg.

Then I realised Pete was licked. He looked licked all over. I was trying to decide whether that was good or bad news when this little dried-up dude reaches into his creel and yanks out a fish.

Without knowing it, I rose right up out of my chair. Feller, he'd yanked out a trout! It was a brown that'd go five pounds. He dangled there, the old man holding him by the gills in the sunshine. The red spots on his sides looked like rubies; he was golden yellow on the belly and seal brown on the back.

"Oh!" this Lola said. "Oh—isn't—that——"

She didn't finish and the dangdest expression you ever saw came into her eyes. She looked from the fish to her old man as if she'd just heard him sentenced for life. Fact, Joe; she couldn't have looked more stunned if her father'd just drawn the big house from then on.

Nobody else got it. J. B. muffed it, of course. Donovan missed.

"He-he-he!" cackled the old dude. "Thought I'd show him to you 'fore I entered him in th' contest!" he said, and, Joe, his tone had barbs in it. "Thought you might crave a look at th' year's biggest fish," he said and it was as if he stuck knives in Wellenburg and twisted 'em. "Five pounds 'nd two ounces, dressed!" he said. "How's that taste in yer pipe?" he asked, and dropped the fish into his creel and wiped his fingers on his trousers and gave Wellenburg a look that would shrivel asbestos, and turned and tottered out.

I knew what it was, see? I knew what made Lola look that way. I knew that here was one of those old and murderous rivalries that'll sometimes grow up between fishermen. I knew that this little dude had simply pulled Wellenburg's vitals out and tramped on 'em before us all, understand? And when J. B. started to walk right in where an angel would have feared to tread, I tried to stop him.

That's what he did, Joe. Started right in and I tried to stop him. I didn't even speak to Pete, who began to wish us luck under his breath. I didn't even think how Lola's red hair smelled when I brushed past her. I was trying to avert catastrophe and give Ajax anyhow a fighting chance. J. B. didn't look when I whispered to him. I grabbed his arm and he shook me off and walked right on into that office behind Wellenburg. It might as well have been a den of lions.

"Mr. Wellenburg," he said. "I'm J. B. McKay, of Ajax Preserving. I've come a long ways to see you," he said, sticking out his hand and grinning. "I tried to see you last night and couldn't," he said, his eyes bulging some when Wellenburg didn't notice his hand, "but it's better late than never," he said.

Oh, something terrible was coming, Joe, and you didn't have to be a fisherman to know it. Wellenburg is a tall, slim codger with the baldest head you ever saw and that head was so red it had a purple tinge. You'd have thought he was going to have a stroke right there.

"Ajax?" he said and his voice was like an icicle. "Ajax Preserving?" he said. "More of these maraschino fellers, eh?" he said and his tone and look made our business seem low and shameful.

But J. B. never weakened. I'll have to hand it to him; he was in Dutch, but he wouldn't turn and run. He just grinned and said yes, sir, we were just

(*please turn over*)

that, and rubbed his hands, trying to be affable.

"Maraschino fellers!" Wellenburg said and clicked his tongue. "Despoilers of Nature's achievements!" he said and J. B.'s lip commenced to sag. "Maraschino!" he said, in the nastiest whisper you ever heard.

"Yes, sir," said J. B., and you'll have to admit it took nerve for him to get the reef into that lip and hold his grin. "I understand you've got quite a tonnage of sweets," he said. "I'm here to take them off your hands at a handsome profit," he said.

"So you want to buy my sweets!" Wellenburg said in that same low, sneering tone. "So you want to take over my contracts, do you?" he said. "You'll offer me seven cents a pound before you get through, like the rest of your shameless tribe!" he said.

"So you want my growers to pick green fruit, do you? So you want to put 'em into your stinking brine that'll take out all the colour that the Almighty and the science of horticulture have bred into 'em, do you? So you want to drain out every vestige of the natural flavour that's in them, even under-ripe, do you?" he said, and his Adam's apple worked like a shuttle.

"And then you'll put in your own hideous dye, will you?" he said through his teeth. "Next you'll put in what you call your flavour, will you? Bah!" he said and made a face. "Flavour!" he muttered, his teeth tight together and lips drawn back. "An insult to the human taste!" he hissed. "An insult to the science of horticulture! An insult to the Almighty!" he whispered and waved his arms.

The idea was, see, that he didn't want to sell us his cherries.

"You fellers make me sick," he said. "As sick as your cherries would make me if I'd stoop to taste 'em!" he said.

"For thirty years I've been packing tree-ripe sweet cherries as they should be packed," he said. "I've preserved their natural colour and flavour in sixty-degree syrup," he said. "I produce a delicacy," he said, "a healthful food, a tempting luxury for normal tastes," he said and began to sort of pant.

"Mr. Wellenburg," said J. B., "I admit our product can't compare with yours for most uses," he said, working for an in, "but there's a growing demand for it, and the price we offer is high."

"Money?" asked Wellenburg. "What's money?" he asked. "I've bought well and processed well and sold well for thirty years," he said. "I've made more money than I know what to do with," he said. "I have something I value higher than money," he said. "That's my respect for the results of the science of horticulture and pride in my product!" he said and yanked out his desk chair.

"If that's all you've got to say it's all I've got to say!" he said and sat down and grabbed for a pile of correspondence.

Joe, I tell you my scorn for J. B. that minute was sort of holy. Here was the bozo with what Ajax had to have or else be sunk, and J. B.'d scattered beans all over the place. There was a way of getting to Wellenburg and I knew what it was.

While Wellenburg had poured it into us I'd seen things. I'd seen fly boxes on his desk. I'd seen a landing net in a corner. And I'd seen a frieze of fish profiles on his office wall. Paper profiles of fish, understand, with dates and weights marked on 'em. A nut, see? A worse nut than I am, by a hundred times. And if a man has a hobby or a weakness and you can play on it in the right way, you're going to get what you want out of him.

And I'd tried to stop J. B. I'd seen it coming and tried to stop him, but he wouldn't pay any attention. Nothing at all had registered with him except that we were licked.

"See what it gets a man?" he snarled when we got outside. "See what fishing does to a man?" he sneered. "When you're the kind that puts pleasure before business."

I didn't even listen. I drove him down to the telegraph office to send in the bad news.

Now, a sporting-goods store is right across from where I parked, and a guy was just putting thi. trout the old dude had crushed Wellenburg with, in the window and I went across for a look.

A half dozen town lads were giving it the eye, to. "Wellenburg 'll be nuts now!" one of them laughed, "with old Alec bringing in a fish like that."

See how right I'd been, Joe? The rivalry between those old coots was almost a feud, and the whole town knows it.

Well, next we started out to see growers. We called on twenty before noon and not one had any sweet cherries loose. What the co-op didn't have, Wellenburg did, having specialised in them for years. He had over a million pounds tied up; twice what we needed.

J. B. was as peevish as a kid with the rash. All this country is close to water. Most of the orchards are out along the bay, and about every twenty minutes J. B. 'd say: "Pleasure before business! Thinkin' of the fish in that bay instead of th' cherries that ain't goin' into our barrels, eh?"

Along the middle of the afternoon we were in an orchard back from the bay. It's high up and looks down into the valley of the Boardman River, and with everything gone to pot, I was thinking more of getting my mind off troubles than anything else.

J. B. was talking to the grower, and a kid was choring around, and I asked him if he ever fished the river, and we talked some and I didn't hear J. B. come up behind us. He stood there and listened and then said if I could spare time he'd like to get to town.

"Get me to town," he said, crawling into the car, "as fast as you can and don't drive like a fool, either," he said. "I got another of my headaches coming on," he sort of whimpered.

After we got out on the highway he went on:

"If it wasn't for other things," he said, "my head would ache from you!" he said and he seemed to be about nuts. Worse than he'd ever been before, see? Just wild, Joe. "Hell's broke loose for us and you stand and gas about fishing!

"I'm through!" he said. "My patience is gone!" he said. "You're fired," he said. "Beginning now. At three-twenty!" he said, looking at his watch. Then he put his head in his hands and moaned.

There it was, understand. I'd pounded three years down a rathole. I never was going to get a crack at the new coast branch. And, worst of all, I never was going to get a chance to tell J. B. what I thought of him. Not in the proper way. The only way it could be done proper was after topside had recognised me as something besides just another name on the pay roll and moved me up from under J. B.'s thumb.

Well, I was about balmy. It was one of those times when the only thing to do is go fishing.

You know, Joe, fishing is kind of like dope. It irons you out. Soothes you. Makes troubles seem small. I commenced to lose that awful feeling of being licked. I commenced to tell myself the world was full of jobs. I commenced to feel all relaxed. I didn't catch any fish, but I didn't care.

Along after sundown I worked back to where I'd parked my car, because the clerk at the hotel had told me it was a sweet place for the night fishing. I put on a big fly and sat on the bank with my feet in the water. Swallows and night hawks were feeding on bugs high up. A muskrat swam the river. A jacksnipe spiraled up and winnowed down. Mating stuff, understand, and I got thinking about this Lola Wellenburg and realising I hadn't appreciated her earlier in the day. I got to wondering if a guy with three years in the maraschino business might not tie into something in a cherry country like this.

Then another car came in off the highway with Wellenburg and his daughter. Old Wellenburg got out and rigged up and Lola began to knit, sitting in the car. I thought what chance would I ever have with a girl who had an old man like that, especially when I was off on the wrong foot with him to begin with? I got up and started

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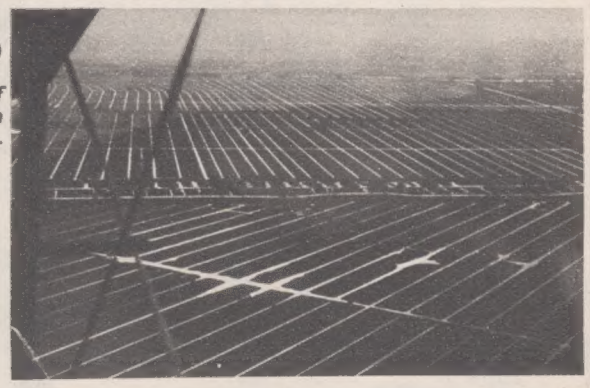
CURIOSNAPS

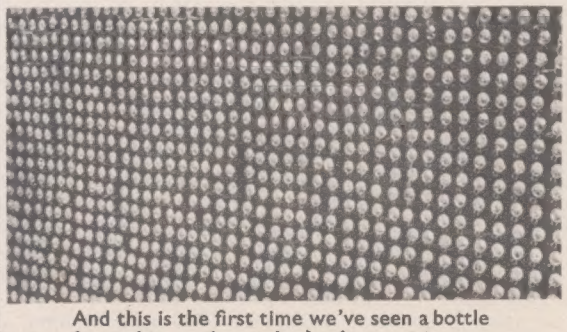
"Passing Show" readers who send in original photographs of queer sights suitable for this feature, receive 10/6 for each picture published. They should enclose stamped envelope.

Sinister warning to motorists this. Traffic lights in the shadow of the gallows sign at Waltham Cross, Herts

—And now the inn of "Five Alls" at Marlborough, Wilts

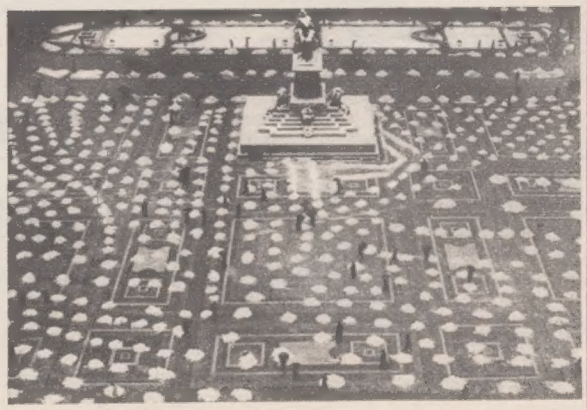


Just an aerial view of Holland—and none of those things it might look like



And this is the first time we've seen a bottle from this angle—and they're waiting to be filled in a factory at Source Perrier, France

Home-Sweet-Home—or how the watchman outside Belfast built and decorated this hut on the Coronation of George VI, with items rescued from the refuse dump



We looked at this a lot—and guessed a lot—but it didn't occur to us that these spots before the eyes were piles of snow swept up by workmen in the Cathedral Square, Milan

FATHER OF ALL TOURISTS

This is the story of a man who told the world how to "go places" as quickly, safely and cheaply as possible

BY W. J. PASSINGHAM

KARL BAEDEKER

MORE than a century has passed since travelling for pleasure was regarded as a mild form of lunacy on the part of the "queer" English, and held up as the last damning piece of evidence—if such were needed—to prove that this strange race of people were hardly human.

First holiday-makers came in small parties to visit the continental battlefields, where their countrymen had fought for so long against Napoleon Bonaparte, carrying copies of Lord Byron's works to guide them along the trail from Quatre Bras to Waterloo and other places where the British had died in their thousands for something vital in their long traditions—the sacred cause of Freedom.

Trouble began for the first tourists from the moment they landed on foreign soil, for while Lord Byron rose to heights of immortality with his verse he failed to help his worshippers in such all important matters as board and lodging—the best places to go, and, above all, how to find them.

Indeed, it required a greater than Byron to initiate and develop that universal blessing called holidays, that source of happiness and health for Mankind generally, until in the space of little more than a century a whole nation lifted up its voice with one accord and demanded "Holidays with Pay!"

Holidays began as an eccentric pastime for the rich, and during the course of a century have developed into a vast industry—an industry which has done more to bring nations together so that they can understand and appreciate each other's difficulties than any other feature of our modern civilisation. Millions of pounds are circulated throughout the modern world because of holidays, which have not failed to create employment in every country where tourist traffic is encouraged.

It was a certain Karl Baedeker, born in the year 1801 at Essen, Germany, who paved the way for countless feet over the highways and byways of great continents. Baedeker—whose name became synonymous with a "good guide-book," to whom great railway systems, great shipping companies and other forms of transport owe much of their present prosperity—may be regarded as the father of all tourists.

How many travellers of the early nineteenth century were hopelessly lost, and sometimes in extreme danger, through the lack of an adequate guide-book? Herbert Spenser points out, in his *Autobiography*, how near he came to disaster when walking in strange and lonely places, and observes that "from time to time many lives are lost, and every year many illnesses caused by mis-direction and lack of a guide-book. . . ."

Francis Bacon was the first to give advice to those who would "put their travel into little room, and in short time gather much. . . ." He also mentions the three essential qualities of a guide-book. "First it must have some entrance to the language where the traveller goeth. The second is that it must be as a servant or tutor who knoweth the country. Of greater importance is it that the book faithfully describe the country where he travelleth, and be a good key to his inquiry."

In other words—a "Baedeker."

Karl Baedeker was descended from a long line of literary forbears founded by Dietrich Baedeker, a publisher of the seventeenth century. This Karl was the son of Gottschalk Baedeker, who founded a famous newspaper called the *Rheinisch-Westfaelische Zeitung*, and the first indication of his future career were frequent quarrels with his schoolmaster over details of geography—such details as are beneath the notice of students, but the very breath of life to travellers in a strange land.

He was regarded as an eccentric youth not only at school, but also in the publishing houses of Messrs. Mohr and Winter and of George Reimer in Berlin, where he learned his trade. For Karl Baedeker walked the highways like a tramp at every opportunity, gathering information as he went and making copious notes of all he learned, and none could understand his motive. He walked where many feared to tread at his age in search of knowledge, and on more than one occasion was chased for his life out of the many military training-camps which surrounded Berlin in those days.

After three years in Berlin he returned to Essen and entered his father's publishing business. But Karl Baedeker was not one who fitted easily into any organisation. He was an individualist, frank in speech and writing to the point of rudeness—a young man with ideas as yet strange to the publishing world. There were no regrets when in 1827 he left Essen for Coblenz, where at twenty-six years of age he founded the business that has made his name world-famous—a word included in dictionaries of many languages to indicate a "guide-book."

That Karl Baedeker was not the originator of guide-books, however, is made clear by his son in a letter to *The Times*, London, in 1889:

"My father, Karl Baedeker, had, it is true, on his settlement at Coblenz, purchased and published a handbook to the Rhine in German and French which possessed many of the features of a modern guide-book; but it was

(*Please turn over*)

"Highly important details about hotels, railways, currency, customs and prices are given in profusion."

A search by the douaniers at the French frontier

the sight of the numerous English travellers following the footsteps of *Childe Harold*, with a Murray's guide-book under their arms, that suggested to him the desirability of providing his German countrymen with similar books for other parts of Europe. The German books which he then successively published certainly owed a great deal to Mr. Murray's books, but included many descriptions of his own, and in the important practical points—such as recommendations of hotels, information as to means of communication—were completely independent. . . .

"The later guide-books published by my father and those published by my elder brothers and myself are perfectly independent works, produced with the assistance of able helpers, many of whom are eminent scholars and specialists."

Without the necessary capital to produce the book, and with no particular framework in mind, he opened a small book-shop in Coblenz and engaged an assistant. Leaving the assistant to sell books, he himself tramped for hundreds of miles through the Rhine districts with a notebook—climbing hills, rowing a small dinghy on the river, losing himself time and again to become acquainted with every difficulty in travelling through the many localities he explored.

Soon he became known in Coblenz as the man who knew every road, footpath, farmstead—every landmark along the banks of the Rhine. During these long absences from home, of course, the book-shop trade declined and Baedeker was on the verge of bankruptcy when Destiny took a hand in his strange career.

One day he saved a dog from drowning in the Rhine, and the grateful owner, knowing Baedeker's love of the locality, presented him with a guide-book—a copy of Klein's *Rheinreise*. That book revived all Baedeker's enthusiasm for his work.

"I only saved your dog," he told the donor in later years, "but you saved my future with the little book."

For the design of Klein's guide-book gave Baedeker the framework for all his future publications, and with his remaining capital he bought the entire copyright from the publishers. Then in desperation he appealed to his father in Essen for help, and when he received it Karl sat down and rewrote Klein's *Rheinreise*. The new edition was published under Klein's name in 1839, and was sold out in three weeks.

This was the turning-point in the romantic career of Baedeker. In the same year he published the "Fuehrer durch Belgien und Holland" (Guide Through Belgium and Holland), and again the sales exceeded his expectations. From now onward Baedeker did not hesitate about the expense. He left the assistant in charge of the shop in Coblenz, and set out on his adventurous journeying through Europe to show the rest of the world how to travel and enjoy it.

His object was to show that travel is not the prerogative of the rich, and by way of proof the approximate cost of everything a tourist might need was included in a "Baedeker." All previous guide-books assumed, more or less, that the main items of touring were coaches, the demand for passports and ministerial introductions, and the movements of high society.

But Baedeker was mainly concerned with the problem of how to get there as quickly, safely, and as cheaply as possible. He wished to—"render the traveller as nearly as possible independent of hotel keepers, commissionaires and guides."

From his personal experience, he made records of those unpretentious inns so dear to the heart of the tourist who travels light and far—gave warnings of those hostelries where he found "faulty mental arithmetic among the waiters" and hints on the best way to "husband your resources." With all the accustomed thoroughness of the Teuton he discovered places where one might expect "civility" and "clean bed linen" as well as "meals fit for hungry men," and made note of the fact that "prices here generally have an upward tendency."

Every European capital was carefully explored before guide-books about them appeared. Baedeker's information was imparted without fear or favour. At one time his books were banned in France until a considerable sum of money was paid in compensation to a hotel-keeper for the comment "complained of" in reference to the establishment.

The Neapolitan Chamber of Commerce protested through official channels against revelations in Baedeker's guide-book to the effect that begging was common in Italy, that the rifling of trunks was not wholly unknown there, that the heat of Naples is oppressive in September, and that the popular idea of cleanliness throughout Southern Italy left much to be desired.

Chemists of Rome pooled their resources to take legal action against Baedeker who dared to recommend tourists to buy at shops kept by British and Americans in preference to those of Italian druggists.

When Baedeker explored London for the purposes of a guide-book he paid for information from traffic experts, cab-drivers, crossing-sweepers, costermongers—from anybody who had specialised knowledge of the great city. Thus he, a stranger and a foreigner, was able to tell his readers in "London and Its Environs," 1881, that—"The stranger is warned against going to any unrecommended house near Leicester Square, as there are several houses of doubtful reputation in this locality."

And if our fathers' stories of London in the 'eighties are in any way reliable, Baedeker certainly put his finger on a tough spot!

The first guide-book for London also mentions that "the traveller's thirst can at all times be conveniently quenched at what is called a 'Public House' where bitter beer, ale, stout and a mixture described as 'half and half' may be had for three-halfpence." Good old days, eh!

This same guide to London contains an "Outline of English History" from 55 B.C. to A.D. 1857, together with a "Historical Sketch of London" that would be real education to the majority of its citizens. Baedeker solemnly warns the tourist in London of 1881—"We need hardly caution newcomers against the artifices of picking pockets and the wiles of impostors, two fraternities very numerous in London. It is even prudent to avoid speaking to strangers in the street. . . ."

To gather the detailed and varied information that distinguishes a "Baedeker," the author must have not only a knowledge of geography as it is taught in classrooms but an acquaintance with that romantic kind which is rather folklore and legend. It would be a grave mistake, for example, to conduct tourists through the Trossachs without a thorough knowledge of Scotland's bloody history.

Baedeker is never at fault in naming the spot where Roderick fought and died, where the real tree is situated in which fugitive Charles hid himself from the Roundheads, or the exact procedure to be followed when kissing the Blarney Stone—of which he undoubtedly had personal experience.

In great contrast to this romantic aspect of touring are prosaic but highly important details about hotels, railways, currency, customs, and prices—and these are given in profusion, even to the best "bed and breakfast" establishment for cyclists.

At coastal resorts such a detail as sea-bathing is thoroughly investigated, and for one of these places he advises "only three dips and out." Another feature of first importance in a "Baedeker" is the number and excellence of the maps, which in some cases are fine examples of the cartographer's art.

"A good map," Bedeker argued, "will save many pages of descriptive writing."

Maps and plans are an integral part of the text in Baedeker's case, and he was the pioneer of guide-books in this respect. He also was the first to use varying types of print to emphasize the importance of his facts, and the employment of an asterisk as a "mark of commendation." At first the little stars were a great joke among his readers, until their accuracy was proved and appreciated.

After a few years each guide-book—and there are now several hundreds in circulation dealing with every country in the world—is thoroughly overhauled so that it becomes practically a new book in form. Still, today, the whole scheme of these books—the framework which the various editors have to fill in—is the original work of Karl Baedeker.

All the mechanical work of the "Baedekers," including the printing, map-making and binding, is done in Germany—most of it in Leipsic, where the firm has been established since 1872.

Data from all over the world pours into the "Baedeker" mill, and not even a small inn-keeper in a remote village can be sure that the virtues or otherwise of his establishment are not set out faithfully for the information of tourists the world over.

And the result?

Tourists from abroad spend £11,000,000 yearly in Great Britain alone and in France the tourist industry is worth £70,000,000 a year.

PRECIOUS AS HER DRESS

"I'm so sorry" said he, doffing his hat. "I've absolutely no excuse to make, my careless chauffeur is responsible"

SHORT SHORT STORY

COMPLETE ON THIS PAGE

BY A. P. GARLAND

ILLUSTRATED BY COLIN ORME

IT was a drab-February afternoon and the one bright spot in St. James's Street, S.W.1, was the violet dress that hung so gracefully on the shapely form of Milly Canfor.

There was a swagger coat of silver musquash above it, but this she had advisedly left open so that the glory of the dress might be revealed for the world's delight. Milly was proud of the dress; prouder of it than she was of any other part of her trousseau. Why, that very day, when lunching with her husband, Harold, at the Noblesse Café, she could not have failed to notice the number of men that had stared, almost rudely, at it. Milly, you see, had little or no vanity and she did not realise that what held men's attention was not the dress, but her own loveliness, vivid as the colours of Titian.

Full of her happy day-dreams, Milly was now standing carelessly on the edge of the pavement, waiting for a break in the traffic to allow her to cross the road, and she failed to notice the pool of muddy water that lay a yard or so from the kerb. The next moment a big car swept by and the girl gave a little shriek of horror as a large splash from the wheel came to mar the purity of the precious dress.

Her cry of dismay caught the ears of the man in the back of the car and he looked around swiftly. At once the girl's attitude as she ruefully held up the front of her frock made the situation clear. Promptly he signalled his chauffeur to halt and in a moment he was hurrying along the pavement to Milly.

"I'm so sorry," said he, doffing his hat.

Milly looked up and their eyes met.

"Oh," said she, nervously. "You are—you are Sir James Edley. You are staying at the Elite."

"Yes," he replied. "Are you staying there, too?"

"Yes. You were pointed out to me yesterday."

"That's splendid. Please let me drive you back there and do what I can to repair the damage."

Milly could do nothing but consent, so a moment later she found herself seated by the side of the great Canadian railway magnate, in a more luxurious car than she could ever remember seeing before.

Now normally it would seem strange for the wife of a thirty-year-old Liverpool chartered accountant to be a guest at a hotel that harboured a millionaire, but this week in London was part of Milly's honeymoon trip and Harold Canfor, her husband, who was doing well and had great ambitions, had decided to do things in style.

The big car did not take long to reach the Elite, and during that time Sir James, with kindly tact, was able to break down his fair passenger's shyness.

"My chauffeur ought to be pole-axed," he confessed. "I've warned him before about driving fast when there are pools about. So will you please get yourself a new dress to replace the one he's spoiled and let me have the bill. I'm in Suite 7."

Milly made a feeble protest and suggested that it might be possible to have the dress cleaned, but the man pooh-poohed the idea. In fact his old-fashioned courtesy and deference were such as the girl had never experienced before and she was in a state of elation when she had said good-bye to the millionaire and found herself once more in her own room.

Here she promptly took off the precious dress and examined it. At first the sight of the ugly stain almost brought tears to her eyes. What good was a new dress? How could she ever hope to match that delicious colour? Nor could she expect such a perfect fit as the violet had been. In fact, it looked as if the violet dress were irreplaceable. Sir James had been kind and generous, but there were certain things money could not buy.

"I wonder, could that stain be got out with a little hot water," she thought. She tried the experiment, but though the mud vanished, there was still an oily stain left.

Then she remembered a grease-removing preparation in her kit, which she had been told would work wonders.

"It might do it," she murmured. "I'll try it with a hot iron."

Meanwhile Sir James Edley had made his way to his own suite at the door of which his valet met him.

"Gentleman to see you, sir," said he.

"Who is he?" asked Sir James. "I don't remember any appointment for this afternoon."

"No, sir." Then the man added in a low tone: "It's Mr. Frank Branson. He insisted on waiting till you came back. He's in the sitting-room."

"Branson? So he's turned up in London. All right. I'll see him."

He gave his hat and coat to the valet and walked with firm strides to the sitting-room. As he opened the door, a man rose from a chair beside a table in the centre of the room.

"Hello, Branson," said Sir James, closing the door. "I did not expect to see you on this side of the Atlantic."

"I don't suppose you did, but here I am."

"So I see," said Sir James, calmly. "Well, sit down."

The visitor sat down again and Sir James took a chair on the opposite side of the table, at the same time bending a keen eye on the ungracious figure before him.

"Now," said Sir James, bluntly, "what's brought you here?"

"Mary," was the reply.

At once the older man's face clouded.

"Mary?" he repeated. Then sadly, "Mary is dead."

"I know," said the other. "But she mightn't have died if you hadn't taken her away from me. Don't deny it, blast you. It was you who stole her from me."

"I don't deny it," said Sir James, completely calm. "You were a drunken, brutal beast, and it's been my biggest regret that I ever consented to her marrying you. So when I found what a rotter you were I advised her to leave you and I helped her. I'd do the same again. You were never fit to tie her shoe-laces."

"That's a lie. She was happy with me."

"Happy? You were always drunk and always cruel. I saw the bruises on her arms where you gripped her in a fury."

"She was my wife, wasn't she?"

"Unfortunately, yes. And her religion prevented her from divorcing you. That's why I got her to leave you. And now you've the nerve to come here. What are you looking for—more money?"

"No," screamed the other. "To hell with your money! I don't want a penny of it. I want something else. You robbed me of Mary and I'm going to kill you for it."

He plunged his hand into his outer coat pocket and withdrew a small, automatic revolver, with a blue sheen on its surface.

"Now will you throw me out?" he went on. "There are seven shells in this gun and every one of them is going into that big, ugly carcase of yours. How do you like that?"

The older man kept outwardly calm, though he knew he was in a tight corner. Branson was obviously a raving lunatic, but a raving lunatic with a gun was a desperate menace. Also, he knew that Branson could use a revolver and that to try to rush him might be fatal."

"Time's up, Edley," said Branson, lifting the gun.

At that moment the lights went out!

Instinctively Sir James sank to the floor—one tiny fraction of a second before the gun spoke, then with a wild dive he hurled the table against the other man. In the darkness he heard a cry of pain and the sound of a body crashing to the floor. The next moment he had moved around the table and his strong arms were groping for the foiled assassin. A moment after that Sir James was master of the gun and the situation.

"Milly, darling," said Harold Canfor later on to his distressed wife, "you must never use that electric iron of yours in a strange place without knowing if it's safe or not. Fancy fusing all the lights in a swell hotel!"

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON CATCHES THE NINE-FIFTEEN

Continuing a series of stories about the men who met on the nine-fifteen each morning, we hear how they did their best to keep up the Duke of Wellington's spirits even when they knew about his exploits at the Duchess's ball

BY WILL SCOTT

ILLUSTRATED BY JACK M. FAULKS

I SHALL never forget the morning we found the Duke of Wellington on the platform at Salt's Halt.

There was a fog as thick as your head, and a frost with it, and the Duke of Wellington looked absolutely fed to the teeth. His sword was too big for him and trailed behind a bit. One of his famous side-whiskers was gone and he pulled at his pipe as if he'd just come back from the Battle of Waterloo, having lost.

Salt's Halt isn't a big place and nobody has ever found out why the nine-fifteen stops there. On this particular morning the Duke of Wellington was the only passenger, but the station master and Salt's Halt's one porter were parked about a yard away, staring at him. They looked as if they'd been asking questions and getting no answers.

As soon as the train stopped he tumbled into our compartment and slammed the door on Salt's Halt and its station staff. Then he mopped his brow and looked at us.

"Hell!" said the Duke of Wellington.

Teddy Dybbs tried to be funny. It was about all you *could* be in the circumstances.

"Haven't we met somewhere?" he inquired. "Wasn't it at the Battle of the Nile?"

But our distinguished visitor seemed to have only one idea in his head.

"Hell!" said the Duke of Wellington.

This was in the Turtle's time. I've told you about the Turtle, the man with a good word for nobody, the man everybody hated. Well, the Turtle was with us that morning and as full of loving kindness as ever.

He just glared at the Duke of Wellington, and said in a voice that everybody could hear, including the Duke:

"Tight!"

The Duke of Wellington sighed and pressed his head. "That," said the Duke, "is where you're quite wrong, although you're nearly right. To put it plainer, you're late. I *was* tight. Hell's bells, *how* tight! Do you think I'd be like this if I'd stayed sober? It's not really my fault, anyway."

Old Sloman asked for details.

"Oliver Cromwell and William Tell did this to me," the Duke of Wellington complained. "After the ball was over, as the song says, they took me home to William Tell's bungalow and put me to bed. Then off they went to town in Oliver Cromwell's car, taking my other clothes with them. When I woke up this morning, to my disgust I was still the Duke of Wellington. I didn't really mind so *much*. I'd got my two-seater, they hadn't taken that. I could have got up to town somehow in my two-seater, but for this infernal fog."

He sighed again.

"I ran it into a tree and bust the thing. You'll see it out of the window soon, I should think. It's somewhere round here. I've had a hell of a time for fifteen minutes at that lousy station. And now I've got to get out at Cannon Street looking like this." He frowned at the Turtle. "It was a good ball, anyway—what I can remember of it. I hope the duchess never gets to hear of what happened to me. I'd never hear the end of it."

"Duchess of Wellington?" asked Long John.

"No," said the Iron Duke. "Lady—— Whatever her name was. Hanged if I know. Pal of Oliver Cromwell. She threw the ball last night. Something castle. I just followed the others."

He looked down at his uniform and groaned.

"I *can't* be seen in London like this!" he said. And looking at me: "I'll give you twice what you paid for it for that overcoat. On the nail."

I couldn't quite see this.

"After all," I told him, "you have *got* a coat."

It was a perfect brute of a morning, and if one of us had to go without a coat I didn't see why it shouldn't be the Duke of Wellington. After all, it was his fault, in a way, that he had the sort of coat he had. At least, it wasn't my fault.

"But I can't be seen in *this*!" he protested.

"No more can I," I said.

He offered Long John a pound on the spot for his hat. It had cost perhaps three and ninepence new, and it hadn't been new for a year. Long John took him on and a pound changed hands.

That was easy. It was when he came to trousers that he found a snag or two. He managed a collar and tie. Young Tilly parted with his for perhaps twice what he had paid for them. But after that there was a slow-down. Old Sloman said he couldn't see himself explaining away the Duke of Wellington's trousers if he went to the office like that, although the price offered was what is called "tempting." And the same applied to the Duke of Wellington's waistcoat and the rest of his outfit.

We were all sorry for him, but charity isn't the only thing that begins at home.

Anyway, the Duke put on Tilly's collar and tie and Long John's bowler and when he had a look at himself in the mirror under the luggage rack he told us he felt he'd like to be sick.

"This is worse than ever," he said. "If I can't get the rest of the kit, the collar, tie and hat are worse than useless. I shall have every damned guttersnipe in London following me round and hooting! This is worse than death."

He looked as if he'd like his money back, but there were no offers. So he sat there like a statue of gloom, nine-tenths the Iron Duke and one-tenth bowler hat and soft collar and tie, saying he wished he'd never been born.

"If this were the Fifth of November," said the Turtle, helpfully, "you could make your will."

The Duke of Wellington gave him a foul look. Nobody, so far as I know, ever liked the Turtle, but the Duke looked as if he could strangle him. I thought I'd like to live to see the day when the Duke landed a beauty right on the Turtle's nose. I didn't know I was going to!

Well, I don't know what would have happened, but just then Archibald came along to see what we wanted. We all wanted double Scotches, except the Duke of Wellington, who wanted trousers quick and the rest of the things as soon as possible.

Archibald seemed astonished to meet the Duke of Wellington in our carriage. We had to explain and go into details.

"I see," said Archibald. "Well, now, I might be able to *do* something."

"Do you mean you don't want your trousers?" asked the Duke, hopefully.

Archibald told us. He'd just been served out with a new Pullman kit and he was taking his old kit up to town for his sister's husband, who lived in Islington. That is, he was taking the trousers and the waistcoat. The short tunic would come in useful for the boy to play with. Whoever the boy was.

"So that that's all right as far as it goes, sir," said Archibald. "Trouble is, it doesn't go as far as your feet. You've got a collar and tie. My things will fit you good enough. But what about boots?"

Sufficient, however, unto the day. The Duke of Wellington said that if the worst came to the worst he'd cut the tops off and manage somehow. The main thing was to stop being the Duke of Wellington and start being an Archibald as soon as possible.

"Right you are, sir," said Archibald. "Then if you'll come this way, sir . . ."

And he led the Duke of Wellington away down the corridor.

"I don't like the look of that fellow," said the Turtle, when he was gone.

"He didn't seem to like the look of himself," said Teddy Dybbs.

"I don't mean his clothes; I mean *him*," said the Turtle. "And that story he told was obviously a lie. Ridiculous story. There's something behind it."

"So what?" asked old Sloman.

"So something, maybe," answered the Turtle. "You never know what turns up. I shall keep my eye on that beauty. He was very anxious to get a new set of clothes. Offered anything. Ridiculous prices. He might be a murderer, for all we know."

"I'd offer ridiculous prices," said old Sloman, "if I woke up one morning and found I was the Duke of Wellington. But that isn't to say I've done a murder. I haven't. Not yet."

"How d'you mean?" said the Turtle.

"Don't mean anything," said old Sloman, getting down behind his paper.

About ten minutes later the door opened and the Duke of Wellington looked in. He looked almost smart in his short tunic, with a serviette over his left arm.

"Anything I can get you gentlemen?" he asked, adding: "This is on me."

So we all had another double Scotch each, except the Turtle, who asked for a sandwich as well. Some day somebody will kill the Turtle and get a statue for it.

Anyway, on we went and Archibald seemed to find his new assistant useful. We saw them hurrying along the corridor every now and again. We heard Archibald taking and passing on the orders and the late Duke of Wellington doing the fetching and carrying.

We stopped at a station and went on. We stopped at another station and went on again. And this time the Turtle let out a noise which meant he was pleased with himself. More pleased with himself, that is, than usual. He was always very much pro-Turtle.

"Thought so!" he said.

"Thought *what*?" said Long John.

"Each time we pull up at a station," said the Turtle, "that fellow gets his head out of the Pullman window and has a quick look up and down the platform. Now, what does *that* mean?"

"It means," said Long John, "that he puts his head out of the Pullman window and has a quick look up and down the platform?"

"You know what I mean," snapped the Turtle.

"Well, you mean that, don't you?" said Long John.

"There's something *wrong* about the chap," said the Turtle, "and I'm going to find out what."

"Trust you!" muttered somebody. And old Sloman wanted to know *how*.

"There are ways and means," said the Turtle.

And we found out what he meant at the next stop.

This was Pelham Regis which always meant five minutes and which, in a fog like we had that morning, would probably mean more. You could see the length of the platform, but only just, and travelling

Only the Duke knew where he was going and the Turtle didn't. So that the Duke cleared the stream at the bottom of the embankment and the Turtle didn't. The Turtle went in

generally was about as disarranged as it could be.

The Turtle got out, leaving the door wide open (of course) and I stuck my head out to see what he was up to. He went into a telephone box on the platform and you could see what his game was at once.

Well, there's nothing very exciting in watching a man in a telephone box, so I looked along the train to see if the Duke of Wellington were still up to the tricks that the Turtle had spotted. And sure enough he *was*. His head was out of the Pullman window and his eyes were fixed on the Turtle in the telephone. And you can take it from me the Duke of Wellington didn't look at all happy about something.

I forgot all about the Turtle in watching the Duke, but suddenly I saw the Duke's head pop in and then there was that crash that you always get from a telephone-box door. I looked round and the Turtle was coming back to us, looking more pleased with himself than ever.

He hoisted himself into the carriage and sagged down in his corner.

"Close the door, somebody," he said.

Well, I'm damned!" said old Sloman. And he only closed the door because he was in a hurry to learn what the Turtle had found out.

"I was right!" the Turtle announced.

"What about?" said Sloman.

"Mind, I don't know what he's *done*," said the Turtle, "but the police *are* looking for a man who got away from Lady Herbage's place down the line late last night, done up like the Duke of Wellington. We haven't to say a word to anybody, but they're going to meet the train at Cannon Street."

"Perhaps you'll get a reward," sneered Tilly.

"I never thought about *that*," said the Turtle.

So he made himself comfortable in his corner and thought about it.

Now, we hadn't the slightest idea what it was the Duke of Wellington had done. I mean, not just then. Later on we found out it was attempted jewel robbery which hadn't come off. His yarn about being put to bed in William Tell's bungalow was just eye-wash, though the bit about the smashed car was right enough. That was why, like the drowning man with the straw, he risked boarding the train. He *had* to, and trust to luck getting a change of clothes somehow.

But although it might have been double-barrelled murder for all we knew, if it had come to a wager, our money would have been on the Duke, because the Turtle was such a worm, if you follow me. Although we didn't have a chance to say so, I think we were all hoping that if the police got the Duke they'd get the Turtle at the same time and put him away, just for *being* the Turtle.

You never knew the Turtle, or you'd understand me better.

Anyway, the police didn't get the Duke, and from that day to this they haven't got him so far as I know. Not for what happened at Lady Herbage's place, at all events. He's probably been taken for something else, somewhere else, done up like Julius Caesar.

Still, that's neither here nor there.

The Duke was a peculiar person in some ways, I suppose, but you only had to talk to him to realise he was nobody's fool. He didn't *know* what the Turtle had been telephoning about, but it wasn't his day for taking chances.

The next time he came along as deputy tray-carrier he asked, as casually as you like, how many stops there were before town, explaining that he wasn't used to that line.

We explained just one, London Road, then it was right through to Cannon Street; and London Road was about ten miles on.

"What *he's* wondering," said the Turtle, when the Duke had carried his tray away, "is if they're going to board the train at London Road and get him before we reach Cannon Street."

"And are they?" asked old Sloman.

"They didn't tell me," the Turtle answered.

"They can't have thought of it!" said Sloman.

Well, about five miles later (as we say on the nine-fifteen) the train began to slow down. The fog was thicker than ever just there, but that didn't seem to explain the sudden slowing. We looked up and saw the guard hurry past on the corridor.

"Ah!" exclaimed the Turtle. "You know what *that* means. Somebody's pulled the communication cord! It's that criminal fellow. I'll bet he's making a getaway!"

He jumped up and tumbled out into the corridor himself, with the rest of us after him as fast as we could go. We made towards the Pullman and all the way along passengers were sticking their heads out to see what was the matter.

(please turn over)

We didn't get as far as the Pullman. There was no need. We found the Duke (in an overcoat borrowed from somebody and looking by now the complete civilian) in an empty compartment, the door swinging open, his foot on the running-board, waiting for the speed to drop to the safety line.

Perhaps it was what had been said about a reward, but the Turtle wasn't having *that*. He barged into the compartment and grabbed the Duke of Wellington by the arm. If it had been somebody else but the Turtle we might have helped. As it was we just stood and stared.

He actually got the Duke of Wellington back into the compartment, because I think, the Duke wasn't expecting anything. But the battle didn't stay *there* long. The Duke looked surprised, then he looked annoyed, then he sort of swooped down on the Turtle.

The train was now nearly at stop. We saw the Turtle half-heaved up in the air, and then—no Turtle.

He was out and down the embankment and the Duke jumping after him. Only the Duke knew where he was going and the Turtle didn't. So that the Duke cleared the stream at the bottom of the embankment and the Turtle didn't. The Duke went over and away into the fog. The Turtle went in.

There was a beautiful sound of cracking ice, the delightful sound of a muddy splash, and the Turtle went down out of sight.

We were all at the door by now and could see what was happening. And the most surprising thing of the lot was what was happening farther along the train.

A door in front of the Pullman swung back and out jumped our friend Spindle-Brown and away into the fog. The rest of the passengers, knowing nothing and being surprised into the bargain, did nothing but stare. Spindle-Brown was the only one who went after the Duke of Wellington.

The fog swallowed them up in about thirty seconds, and if we didn't exactly forget about them we'd plenty on our hands to keep us occupied for the moment.

The Turtle might be all we said of him (and a lot more things we didn't know,) but after all he was a human being, or pretty nearly so, and on one of the frostiest and foggiest mornings in living memory he was flopping about in a frozen stream as hard as he could go.

"We practically *got* to save him," said Long John, "so here goes."

We slithered down the embankment and pulled him out. He was an awful sight—worse than usual. He was covered with rotted weed and bits of ice. He was drenched absolutely to the skin and his teeth were chattering till it was almost deafening.

"Get him up," said Long John; and we hoisted him up the embankment between us and tumbled him into the train.

For a minute he just sat and stared at us, dripping ice-cold water all over the upholstery in the carriage. He couldn't say a word. He couldn't stop his teeth chattering long enough. And every three seconds or so he did the most astonishing shiver. Archibald was there and the guard, and most of the passengers on the train were trying to look in the open doorway. Nobody quite knew what it was about, nor why the communication cord had been pulled. Most of them had the idea it was because the Turtle had fallen out.

Archibald came to the point before anybody.

"He'll get double something if he stays like that," said Archibald, "and he'll get it quick. If one of you gentlemen could bring him along to the Pullman we've got a stove."

So Long John and I helped the Turtle along between us to the Pullman, where Archibald already had a hot double Scotch ready. This we poured down the Turtle straight away, and Archibald filled up another.

"Better get his clothes off, sir," said Archibald. "I've got a big rough towel here. That's what *he* wants."

So we took off the Turtle's clothes and got busy with the big rough towel.

But the double Scotch, hot, waswhat seemed to get the Turtle really interested. Which you could understand if you yourself had ever parked in a frozen stream.

Now, although we didn't realise it (I mean just then : we had plenty of other things to think of) the Turtle had never been what you'd call a drinker. He'd have one with us, sometimes, on the train, but mostly he left it at one. I doubt if he'd been really tight in all his life.

But now, as soon as we'd got his clothes off, Archibald gave him another hot double, with a third to follow. And his interest seemed to grow. He stopped talking about his troubles. He almost stopped shivering. All he wanted to talk about was a double Scotch, hot. He even began to laugh, a thing I'd never known him do before.

Before we'd got him really dry Archibald rolled up with a fourth and by the time he *was* dry, what with the reaction against what he'd gone through and the amount of hot Scotch that had been poured into him, he was just about silly drunk. It took some time, though, for the best effects to show.

Meanwhile, without knowing a thing about all this, Spindle-Brown was chasing the Duke of Wellington through the fog.

Spindle-Brown, for some reason, seemed to think it would be all over, except for the loud applause, in about half a minute. But it wasn't.

The first variation on the theme was when Spindle-Brown ran into a fence. Then the Duke ran into a haystack. They shouted at each other. They swore at each other. They lost their breath and they lost their tempers. Then they lost themselves. When they tried to take their bearings there were no bearings to take. They were alone in a world of fog.

We found out afterwards that Spindle-Brown (who had been sitting well up in front of the Pullman that trip) hadn't the faintest idea that the Duke had come aboard in fancy dress. He didn't know anything. When he saw the Duke streak off he simply went after him for reasons of his own.

Ages afterwards, out of curiosity, he tried to find out where the great event had taken place, but he never did. It was near an empty cottage which stood absolutely alone in a sea of fog. That was all he ever knew.

He gave us the details when we met him.

They were both pretty well spent when the battle finished, but Spindle-Brown was in better condition. He was still able to do a bit of talking, but the Duke of Wellington could only gasp.

"Now, listen my son," said Spindle-Brown, when he'd got the Duke firmly by the elbow; "I don't care a damn about your private quarrels, but no man can do *me* and get away with it,

"Private quarrels?" the Duke managed to wheeze.

"You knocked a passenger off the train, didn't you?" said the Spindle-Brown.

The Duke only gaped.

"That's between the two of you," Spindle-Brown went on. "I suppose you'll lose your job for it, especially now you've bunked. But that's neither here nor there. The point is I gave you a pound for a double Scotch and some sandwiches, didn't I? Right. I want eighteen shillings change—and *now*."

The Duke of Wellington must have looked as astonished as he was feeling.

"Eighteen shillings?" he said.

"Eighteen shillings," said Spindle-Brown.

"Why, yes," said the Duke. "Yes, certainly."

And he paid up the eighteen bob and went on staring at Spindle-Brown. He must, right at that moment, have begun believing in tairies all over again.

Spindle-Brown tucked the money in his pocket.

"You don't want to go back to the train, I suppose?" said Spindle-Brown.

"I'm not exactly keen," the Duke admitted.

"Well, we might as well stick together till we know where we are," said Spindle-Brown. "When we find the train we can part. I won't ask you what you socked him on the jaw for. Who was it?"

"They called him the Turtle," said the Duke.

"Shake hands!" said Spindle-Brown. And they solemnly shook hands in the fog.

They kept on walking, but they never found the train. Presently they reached a pub.

"They'll be able to tell us here," said Spindle-Brown. "Come along in."

So they went in and had a double each, to keep out the fog. Then another. And Spindle-Brown, who was feeling he had been perhaps a little unfair to the Duke, insisted on paying for both.

The landlord (who hadn't a mind for small points) told them they were *miles* from the main track, but only about five shillings by taxi from the suburban line. The fog was clearing a bit by now, and the landlord had a son who had a taxi.

The Duke said he thought it was a waste of time getting a taxi, but Spindle-Brown had suddenly remembered that he'd left his umbrella and his attaché-case (with oodles of work inside) on the train, and he'd got to get to Cannon Street somehow and pick them up.

So they got the taxi, and Spindle-Brown paid for the taxi (since it was his idea), and when they reached a small station on the suburban line Spindle-Brown bought the two tickets to Holborn Viaduct, with what remained of his eighteen bob.

"I might just as well have stayed on the train!" he said disgustedly.

They reached Holborn Viaduct and got out.

"Don't suppose you want to come along to Cannon Street with me, do you?" said Spindle-Brown.

"I'd love to," said the Duke of Wellington, "but I've got a date with Oliver Cromwell."

"Who?" said Spindle-Brown, surprised.

"Tell you next time I see you," replied the Duke. And off he went. And never told Spindle-Brown, of course. Because that next time hasn't come round, up to now.

Spindle-Brown took a bus to Cannon Street and went to the Lost Property department about his umbrella and attaché-case.

"What train did you leave them on?" said the man.

"The nine-fifteen," said Spindle-Brown.

"Not in yet," said the man. "There's been a bit of disorganisation down the line. She'll be in any minute now."

So Spindle-Brown went to the platform and waited. And about ten minutes later he saw the Turtle being hauled along the platform by four plain-clothes men. The Turtle, silly drunk on double Scotch, hot.

But not pinched because he was silly drunk. Pinched because he was disguised as the Duke of Wellington. They were the only dry clothes we could find to put on him.

Oh yes, we *could* have explained.

But you didn't know the Turtle, did you?

NEXT WEEK

What was a detective doing in a desert . . . ? **WILLIAM NEIDIG** will tell you

What was to come out of Old Joe's postbag . . . ? **DALE COLLINS** knows the answer

What was the reason for this poisoned drink . . . ? **JOHN RUSSELL FEARN** solves the mystery

What was the sinister power of Archie's ring . . . ? **WILL SCOTT** provides this explanation

What was the Thing that haunted the mountain . . . ? **DUDLEY HOYS** keeps you guessing

BITTERNESS UNLIMITED

We all know that a worm can turn but he may take so long about trying it out, that, in the end he forgets entirely how it's done

BY JOSEPH BOOTHROYD

ILLUSTRATED BY BERTRAM PRANCE

To Jones, himself, the words were meaningless, far distant. His mind was a blazing white light of resentment as he made a terrific effort to return to normality

EDGAR JEROME swept a few papers from the flat top of the desk, pushing them triumphantly into a drawer with a wide, careless gesture. There was an air of finality in the action but not regret. He leaned back comfortably in his chair and looked across the desk to Jones, who sat quietly on the farther side. Jerome, bulky in his chair, which seemed inadequate, smiled happily at his colleague. James Jones was pallid and bald, meagrely thin and, to him, Jerome seemed to bask and swell in the chair, filling the little office with his detestable presence.

"Well, Jonesy," said Jerome, expansively, "that will be that."

Always, thought Jones, angrily, he speaks like that. Senseless words without dignity or meaning, but he did not speak. Jerome swivelled in the chair and looked affectionately, but still without regret, round the room. It was not large or dignified. There were a few maps on the painted walls and one tall bookcase rested, with an air of neglect, beside the window.

"Thirty-five years of it," ruminated Jerome. "Gone like that," and he snapped his fingers symbolically. "Well—it's done. I've finished."

He looked at Jones, who still was silent. Jerome rose and stretched himself.

"You know Jones, I don't *feel* sixty years old. I've got to make a last tour. One or two friends to see." He winked suggestively, then looked at the clock. "I might look in again. If I don't, sign 'em all up, Jonesy."

He laughed loudly and left the office, heavy footed but still vital. Alone in the room Jones sat with his elbows on the desk, staring straight in front. Thoughts crowded his head, bitter but not new thoughts, as he looked across the bare patch of desk, with a suggestion in its vacancy that gave edge to his reverie.

It was almost twenty-seven years since he first occupied the next room to this. That made him thirty-two then and he recalled something of the elation he had felt. It was a fine start, assistant at thirty-two. He married on the strength of it and remembered his insistence to Mary; four or five years and then the department was sure to be his. No telling where he might end, he said to her, exultantly. The expectant thought of that triumph had filled his small mind with an elation that frightened Mary, even then. The first vacancy fell two years afterwards. His hope was real but not passionate for he hardly dared press his claim so early and was not really upset when Smithson got it. Too soon to expect it, he told Mary—but it was sure to come.

There had been a succession of vacancies, a succession of disappointments, rising in volume from mild disbelief to bitter denunciation that was voiced only to Mary, or crushed within himself. For Jones was the perfect servant. The arrival of Jerome had been the bitterest experience of all. He came from the London office and from his arrival Jones hated the man's bland assurance, his animal vitality, his immediate belief that Jones was there to serve him. Not merely to serve him but to teach him, to shield him, in short; thought Jones viciously, to do his job and get nothing for it. For Jerome, by shrewd calculation or lucky accident, knew that Jones was one whose lot it was to serve, to grumble but never to tell. Jerome made no secret of his philosophy, his creed of evading trouble and responsibility. He sensed that Jones was the worm that never turned.

The little man sat on, staring, drawing from an acid memory the hundred and one things he named humiliations. He whispered them to himself angrily. In his early days Jerome had called him Jonesy. He disliked it—hated it and once registered a mild protest, a demand for the prefix Mister, which he treasured. His protest drew a puzzled look and a loud laugh from his chief, who apologised; but the habit persisted.

It was possible for the head of the department to sit back and allow it to run itself if he had a good and capable assistant. Jerome had. Nobody denied that, Jerome least of all. In spite of his meagre appearance, his dry and shrunken air, Jones was efficient and capable; feared a little in the department for his silence, for such is the way of clerkship.

"Sign 'em up, Jonesy."

How often had he heard that? Jones wondered bitterly.

In ten years Jerome had received many advances in salary. So too, had Jones, but he, who did the work of two men received but the half of one of them. He had poured it all into Mary's patiently receptive ears and, since she died, muttered it viciously to himself. Each passing year added its quota of stifled hatred until the thing had grown and swelled inside to abnormal proportions.

Sometimes he thought his hatred of Jerome filled his life, for it centred all his defeated longings. His anger against the company had faded into anger against Jerome. There was no reason in it and the strange thing was that Jerome never sensed it, never realised that his colleague hated him. He knew him for a silent, moody man, but paid him few compliments in the way of study.

And now—Jerome was retiring on pension.

In a week a presentation would take place and usually someone from head office attended when a head of department retired. There would be an official present from the company in addition to the one for which the local staff subscribed. The first name on the list was James Jones.

It was only in the last few weeks that the idea had been born in Jones's mind. The strange, madly fascinating idea that seemed less strange and mad as he revolved it in his mind, until it came to appear as a reasonable thing to do.

He knew the procedure of these presentations inside out, for he had officiated at so many. He had, indeed, deputised for the absent Jerome, on occasion. He knew the flattering remarks, the cheers, the warm and sunny retrospection with which offices speed their departing clerks. This time—it would be different, he thought, savagely, and hoped there would be someone from London to hear it. He had even made notes. Little headings and sub-headings, jotted down neatly; the truth about Jerome which he was going to tell. A change, indeed, from the whitewash brush they usually applied so freely.

He knew the hazards of it, for he was no fool. He knew that in twelve months he, too, was due to retire. It might be that his act would prejudice his pension, that shining beacon of fulfilment. It held him back a little then, but his obsession had pressed him into fearlessness, pressed him, indeed, into foolhardiness. He dramatised himself and his hatred, swore hardily that he would cap his exposure with the climax of his resignation. He had always been a careful man and had no living relatives or dependents. If need be he could retire at once for his wants were modest, his desires few. A glow of

(please turn over)

self vindication, almost the frenzy of martyrdom grew on him.

Yes—his mind was fully made up. In a week there would be the public unmasking of Edgar Jerome and the satisfying discharge of James Jones. He never doubted that he would be believed. It had been his whole thought, had grown into his being. The injustice had been so patent and so long that his burning sincerity must carry conviction. His thoughts were interrupted by the return of Jerome. Jerome's large, red face was shining; he was jovial and carefree.

"Well, Jonesy," he said, breezily, "the last sad farewells have been spoken. I'm off."

"Good-bye, Mr. Jerome. I hope you enjoy good health."

"I've always had that," laughed Jerome. "Trust me. I shall just carry on as usual. No violent upheaval for me. I shall just carry on—golf—club—a jolly good time and all day to do it in now."

Alone, Jones looked again at the empty desk, the chair beside it. A new man was coming next month, but that caused him little uneasiness now. The ten years with Jerome had finally sapped his ambition and to receive the post now would be an empty triumph. He wondered what Mary would have said, had she been alive and he sat down with a dry cough, still staring across at the blank window.

The presentation to Mr. Edgar Jerome was to be held in the general office. That was in accordance with tradition, for presentations always had been made there. The big office was still abustle with activity, alive with movement, as clerks went about their business. Typewriters clicked and telephone-bells rang with an air of normality. Only the table, set within comfortable reach of the big fireplace, gave any indication that an occasion beyond the ordinary was about to be observed.

The table stood in a little space of its own, in isolated dignity, rescued and uplifted from the commonplace by the green baize cloth which covered its scratched and scarred surface. The green cloth raised it from obscurity to distinction, crowned it with importance. On the surface, solemnly and incongruously, lay a set of golf-clubs, the heads peeping strangely from the bag, and a large oak clock. The clock was the company's unchanging present.

The articles had been placed there some time before, had been scrutinised and handled by most, though even yet a curious clerk would pause to inspect them, or a small boy would brush an irreverent hand along the golf-bag.

The door that led from the general office into the private office of Mr. Jones, assistant to the manager, opened quietly but not so quietly that all the clerks in the general office were not aware of it. It was as if some invisible, telepathic message were radiated and instantly the murmur of the office died away to quietness. Typewriters stopped and men and girls turned round to face the opened door. The moment had arrived.

Mr. Rillington, head office representative, led the way from the inner office, followed by Mr. Jerome and in the rear, silent, indrawn, a little withered looking, came Mr. Jones. Silently the three men took their places at the table. In the centre, Mr. Rillington graciously motioned Mr. Jerome to be seated and nodded to Mr. Jones, who also sat down.

Mr. Rillington had a pleasant voice. A reassuring voice that said plainly that for this occasion authority retired before sentiment.

"If you are ready, gentlemen," he said to the office, "I think we might begin."

There was a scraping of stools, a shuffling of feet as men and girls moved forward. Some were hesitant, hanging back foolishly while older, more experienced, or bold young men, pushed forward purposefully and soon a circle sat or stood round the desks, facing that small table at which the three men sat.

Looking from the table, lips compressed, Jones saw sly little grins that lurked on men's lips and a suppressed enjoyment that looked out from their eyes. This was a break in routine but, more than that, these occasions had a taste of licence, as if the gods were descended from their pedestals. Before them, men saw Mr. Jerome, until recently a power in their lives, to be feared, placated, or avoided, now by the magic process of age, rendered merely mortal. It was a reminder of mortality.

The room had seen so many of these occasions, these brief hours of drama, when men strutted a little on the stage of farewell. The room was peopled by the ghosts of departed clerks, holding their sides in humourless laughter as they viewed this farewell scene so oft repeated. The sense of the past lay heavy in the room.

Jones listened to the pleasant cadence of the man from head office, as he extolled the virtues of Edgar Jerome. "Loyal and valued officer . . . position of confidence and responsibility . . . directors' absence . . . kind of man . . . company's interest . . . feel sure all will agree . . . trust never betrayed . . . forgive me for telling this little story. . ." and then the polite titter of laughter from the assembled clerks. Later, Jones thought, when they feel even less aware of servitude, laughter will be louder and unrestrained. Men's eyes will shine in retrospection.

He sat still listening with half an ear, his mind coldly busy on his own speech. He had rehearsed and rehearsed it until he had no need for the sheaf of notes that reposed, neatly in order, in his pocket. The voice of the visitor dropped a little, then gathered speed and volume as it rushed to the finale. Coldly James Jones heard it; his eyes watched the actions of the man, as he presesd upon Jerome the oak clock from the company, the set of golf clubs from the staff.

A frigid calm had descended on Jones, so that his spirit seemed to hang outside his body, watching, appraising. The sense of expectancy grew as Jerome stood, beaming, on the gathering of clerks. He looked bluff and hearty, a little sentimental. There would only be his speech of thanks, a little personal reminiscence. Then the man from London would ask Mr. Jones, assistant to Mr. Jerome, to reply. This, thought Jones savagely, is where more reminiscence follows. The staff would be waiting for the platitudes, the compliments, the dry humour.

As he listened to what Jerome was saying, he saw the sly smiles still lurking on the lips of men. The office was unusually still, until a telephone bell rang. It shrilled through the stillness until Jones curtly motioned to a boy to answer it.

How many such scenes had this office witnessed, thought Jones, oddly. Eighty years the company had occupied the rooms, peopling them with boys, who grew up, married and in due course retired. In his time there must have been dozens and dozens. His mind was taking queer twists, unusual thoughts crowded his head as Jerome's voice went on, rising, falling to the accompaniment of little bursts of laughter.

Jones could read from the faces in front of him almost exactly what Jerome was saying. There was amusement on the faces of the young. Old men thought of their own approaching ends, years seemed as nothing. What if there were something in the theory that words, once spoken, were never lost. What if they did echo and re-echo in space. What if the room were ringing with those silent words of the past. What, indeed, if men did survive, if the air rustled with strange things. To Jones the atmosphere seemed charged with menace. It startled him for he was not usually a prey to foolishness. As he sat on he seemed to lose his identity and the closing words of Jerome's speech wandered into space, without meaning for him.

The loud burst of hand-clapping roused him. He heard the voice of the visitor calling for a response from Mr. Jones. Then his resolve returned. He remembered, recalled his purpose. He stood up and faced the circle of men and girls.

In the space of a second all his bitterness crowded back; he was charged again with anger. He turned his head slowly towards Jerome, who was sitting back in his chair, his face flushed, eyes a little moist. Jones could hear his hard breathing, as of a man spent in running.

As if the words were burned in his brain Jones saw them written large before him. The accusations. The damning statements. A lifetime's bitterness released in a violent attack that was also his own vindication. His body quivered a little in excitement. He opened his lips to speak.

"Mr. Rillington—Mr. Jerome—ladies and gentlemen."

He paused a little for effect.

"In a long and close association with Mr. Jerome—I have only one thing to say." He paused again. To his own senses his words seemed shrill and unreal. Once more he received that powerful sensation of being outside himself. He gripped his notes for help and spoke again.

"I have served under five managers here. I can truthfully say that with none has my association been happier, or smoother, than with Mr. Jerome."

As Jones paused, a look of terror in his eyes, a sense of impending doom in his mind, a slight hand-clapping broke out. Jones swayed a little, clutched his notes tighter and went on. Those watching saw his face pale, his lips tighten with effort. They wondered if he were ill, but the words continued to come, a little forced, falling slowly, as if each one were being drawn forcibly from him.

To Jones himself, the words were meaningless, far distant. His mind was a blazing white light of resentment as he made a terrific effort to return to normality. He heard his own voice then, putting out the compliments, the commonplace remarks that speeded the departing member. Once, he heard his own voice tremble slightly, as if with emotion, as he retailed some act of devotion by Mr. Jerome. A little murmur of approval flitted lightly round the room. Jones felt sick and swayed on his feet, before he slid slowly into his chair and his eyes closed, his mind slipped into blackness.

When he recovered his senses, he was in the manager's room with Mr. Rillington and Jerome bending anxiously over him. On the office-table lay the oak clock and the golf-clubs. The ceremony was over, cut short by the unfortunate indisposition of the manager's assistant.

Jones was conscious of a headache, a feeling of lassitude and as through a mist he heard the voice of Mr. Rillington, anxious, slightly lamenting. They had ordered a car to take him home and as they assisted him out he heard the remark that Mr. Rillington made to Jerome.

"Poor old chap," said the man from head office. "It upset him, Jerome. Often does, when these old chaps get talking about old associations. Sentiment, I suppose, but pleasant. Pleasant. Shows where interest lies."

Then Jones was in the car. He recovered his composure sufficiently to refuse, quite vehemently, their offer to accompany him home. As the car drew away he saw the round red face of Jerome, full of solicitude and the graver, if younger, face of Mr. Rillington. They seemed to be mentally shaking their heads over his sentimental breakdown.

The car drove away and in the back of it, unseen and unnoticed, James Jones laid his head on his arm and wept. For he knew himself an old man, alone, all life behind him given over to bitterness, denied even the satisfaction of his bitterness. He did not begin to wonder what had possessed him in that room. He did not care. He felt old and broken as the car drove on. He sat still and the tears continued to roll unchecked down his puckered cheeks.

THIS GLASS TELLS
ITS OWN STORY

and a very strange story
it is too. Read
GLASS NEMESIS
by
J. RUSSELL FEARM

NEXT WEEK

CARVING BILL ATKINS

BY DAPHNE CLARE

Bill Atkins, is 67 now, retired from building and finding he can get all he wants from his Post Office and the old age pension spends all the sunny hours of his days in his garden

WEST HOUGHAM is a little village in Kent. Dover is three and a half miles away down the hills. Folkestone is about the same distance. Only forty families live there, and there is hardly a village street.

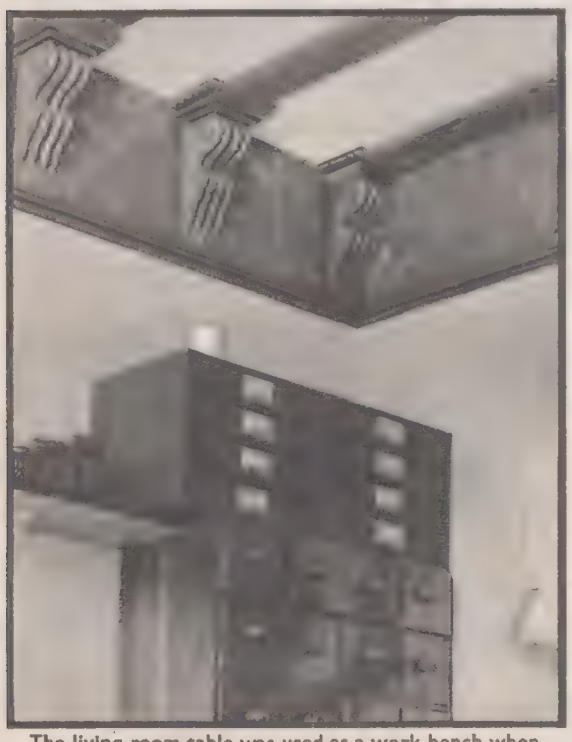
But there is a post office, a remarkable post office to say the least. Bill Atkins is the postmaster and his passion is woodcarving. So for thirty years he has been decorating the "office" and the house behind it.

Beams of the ceilings are carved. The frieze is carved. The woodwork over the front door is carved. There is an enormous panel in the little porch, representing the local mill, and a very elaborate mantelpiece over the fireplace in the living-room. The parlour, too, has its carved frieze and beams.

"Ten years it took me for this one room," he says.

To really appreciate these remarkable works you must know something about Bill Atkins and his family history. His people have lived in the district for generations.

"I was very nearly born in Hougham," he told me. "Came when I was about a fortnight old, in long clothes anyway. Lived here all my life I have. Didn't have much schooling in them days. So long as we went on Monday and with our twopence nobody worried. Twopence a week it were fer school. Started to work when I were ten.



The living-room table was used as a work bench when Bill Atkins was doing these delicate carvings with which his home is decorated. Hall panel, cupboards, beams, and door lintel—they are all his work

"Hard times we had as little 'uns. Had to rough it, we did. Old man believed in making us work hard. No time for learning. Taught myself to read and write. Just picked it up here and there. But I ain't much good at spelling."

His father came to the village to take over the pub "down the road" from where he now lives. It was there he grew up. His father was, also, a builder, and apprenticed young Bill to the trade.

So, working for his father, he became a builder—mostly in Kent, but sometimes they went "abroad" into other counties. Often they were called in to do a bit of restoring in old churches or farmhouses. And it was working in these old buildings that gave Bill a love of old things.

"It gets into yer, these old things," he said. "The more you go into them, the more it gets yer. If you know what I mean; like a fever in yer blood."

When I asked him what made him first start wood carving, he said. "I couldn't tell. I couldn't tell yer no more'n a dead man."

He only knows that he likes to carve in wood. Without knowledge and without training that urge has kept him carving, with a penknife and a chisel, beautiful things in wood for thirty years. And the pride, the satisfaction, the enthusiasm burn in his eyes as he shows you his work.

He never had a lesson in drawing, of course, and used as models pictures he found anywhere, in newspapers, on pamphlets, anything that struck his fancy. In Jubilee year he did a panel reproducing the special halfpenny stamp. It is now part of the frieze in the office.

He became postmaster more than forty years ago. The postmaster left the village and Atkins senior persuaded his son to take on the job. He didn't want to really.

In those days the post office was in another house in the village, but his father and he together built his present home in 1906 and put in a special room for the "office". So the post office moved.

"My father put up the money to build this place," he told me, "but it was in my name. My father held the deeds though, till it was paid for. Got me all tied up, he did, so that I couldn't take it into my head to leave and go away without losing my house."

It was then that he began woodcarving, and he has been going on and on ever since until there is hardly a square inch of wood in the rooms downstairs that hasn't been carved.

BROOD OF THE DRAGON

Longshanks is able to indulge his delight in impish tricks in this story of the feud that existed between the blacksmith and the inn-keeper because Betty smiled

BY FRANCIS FOSTER

ILLUSTRATED BY L. G. ILLINGWORTH

AS you know, throughout the months of winter, Longshanks and I had travelled the countryside by caravan. So soon, however, as spring was full come, we resolved to tramp once more and so, having bid farewell to our friend and horse, Ephraim, and disposed of our ancient vehicle, we took the road once more, on foot.

For the space of an hour or so we were sad because of the parting from Ephraim, but throughout the cold months we had both secretly pined to be once more on Shank's mare and so, in a little while, the magic of that golden morning having laid its spell on us, we began to sing.

I do not know whether we were in Hampshire, in Sussex, or in Surrey, for we were on the common border of all these counties, but we journeyed through a peerless country—I doubt whether it has its rival in all England. The only fly in our ointment was the extraordinary number of lorries, laden with what seemed to be sections of wooden huts, which passed us continually and which we eventually came upon again on a tract of heath-land just outside a pleasant village. In this village we halted outside a smithy, whence came the jolly sound of hammer on anvil.

Nobody can resist looking at a smith at work, nor were we immune from this temptation. With one accord we peered into the darkness of the place and were at once rewarded by seeing the glow of the fire, which was so well-bellowed that it was almost white-hot. Above it, swaying as he pumped, stood the mighty smith, his face and forearm illumined, his hinder part in darkness. And lustily he sang as he worked.

Then his right arm ceased to pump and, of a sudden, he whisked a glowing piece of metal from the white-hot coals and, thrusting it on his anvil, started to beat it into shape, what time he roared a song which had no recognisable tune.

If you had seen this heartening sight, on a jolly spring morning, I have no doubt you would have been as uplifted as we were.

"Longshanks," I shouted, above the din, "I wish I were a smith."

And Longshanks, who was unconsciously thumping his hand against the door post in unison with the beats of the great hammer, shouted in answer: "So do I, Father, for a smith is the salt of the earth."

Then I became aware that someone was trying to get past us into the smithy and I made way. He was a bandy-legged man, who could most certainly not have stopped a pig with his knees, so wide apart were they. He went into the dark interior bellowing: "What ho, there, Jim!"

The smith ceased beating the iron he held in his tongs and looked up.

"Hullo, Collins!" he roared. "'Ow be 'ee, man?" And to our surprise he dropped his hammer and seizing the newcomer's hand, pumped it as vigorously as he had pumped the bellows of the fire. And Collins pumped too, and gave good measure; and then the two of them surveyed each other, the smith with arms akimbo and the other lighting his pipe.

"My boy, Tom, be a Arzoo now," quoth the smith.

"Ar, 'e be," Collins affirmed solemnly.

"'E 'ave got 'is bandylero," the blacksmith went on. "That's wot 'e wrote 'is ma yes'day."

"'Ave 'e, now?" exclaimed Collins, in much admiration.

"So 'e be a full-blown Arzoo," declared the smith.

"You've said a true word, Jim," Collins agreed.

"We'll soon finish the henemy, now," said the smith, proudly.

"We a'n't at war yet, Jim," Collins pointed out, mildly.

"Wot's all the talk about, then?" Jim demanded. "Why do they be wanting all they recruits?"

Collins tried to explain.

Now Longshanks and I had listened to all this talk in amazement. All we could understand was that one, Tom, son of the stalwart smith, was an "Arzoo" and that he had got a "bandylero." And then, of a sudden, I understood.

"He means 'bandolier,'" I told Longshanks.

"Ow much money 'ave you got, Collins?" the smith was saying.

"Sevenpence," answered Collins, digging into his pockets.

"An' I've got a penny," declared Jim, the smith, "so we'll 'ave a pot." He smacked his lips. "I could just about do wi' some beer. We'll drink the 'ealth of the Arzoos in a quart pot, Collins."

"Arzoos?" mumbled Longshanks, in my ear.

"Bandolier" had given me the clue. "He means

"'Tis a Dragon's skull," Jim told me in an impressive voice. There was no smile on his face and it was plain that he believed what he said

'Hussars,'" I said. "His boy has joined the army."

Jim and Collins moved towards us, the former talking proudly of his "Arzoo" son.

"'Mornin', gents," said the smith, seeing us for the first time. "Was you wantin' to see me?"

"No," said I. "We've been admiring you at work."

The smith wagged his great head approvingly. "That's right," he said. "But you'll 'ave to wait a bit now. Me and Collins 'as got to go an' 'ave a pint pot. My boy 'ave just gorn and j'ined the Arzoos, an' 'e's got a bandylero, so 'e 'ave. Collins 'as got sevenpence an' I've got a penny, so we're goin' to 'ave a pot. A'n't we, Collins boy?"

"We'll come along with you," declared Longshanks, "then you'll be able to have two pots—that is, if the good Father has any money!"

The good Father having searched his cassock pockets and found two shillings and fourpence, the four of us went, therefore, across the road to the taproom of the oddly named *Three Spiders Inn*.

The stone-flagged taproom was pleasantly cool. I sat gratefully on a settle by the low window, while Longshanks went with Jim and Collins to the little serving hatch and called for ale.

There are not many inns, nowadays, in which men drink together out of a common quart pot—a pleasant custom that makes for good fellowship, unhygienic though it be—but this was one such. The smith brought the great pewter pot across to me to drink first. I let him have that honour, however, whereupon he quaffed so heartily that but a half of the ale remained for the sharing of the rest of us. Jim passed the pot to Collins, and the bandy-legged man tipped it to his mouth. His Adam's apple went up and down in a slow, deliberate way, and when he was done there was nothing left of that ale. He looked into the pot reflectively, what time Jim, the smith, roared with honest mirth.

"Never mind, gents," said he, at last. "Collins 'ave got sevenpence and I've got a penny, so we'll 'ave another."

He had the pot re-filled and this time Longshanks drank first. To my astonishment, when he set it down, it was empty!

Then the smith slapped his thighs in huge delight, and Collins clapped Longshanks so heartily on the back that the poor fellow gulped in a most alarming manner. And the landlord, who had been surveying us through the little serving hatch, of a sudden cackled with laughter; and I looked sadly into the empty pewter.

"My heye!" bellowed Jim, the smith. "That's a good 'un, that is. Haw! haw! haw!"

"Ho! ho! ho!" rumbled bandy-legged Collins, and "He! he! he!" tittered the landlord through the serving hatch.

Longshanks cocked one eyebrow and looked at me reflectively.

"Now we'll have to have another," he observed. "You shall drink first this time, Father."

Now if this story proceeded as it should do, I should have to say that at the next drinking I beat all three of my companions and quaffed two whole pints of ale at one swallow, but I may not romance. The truth is that the landlord announced that he could not serve any more beer because his single barrel was empty, save for dregs.

"I a'n't a man to order more beer'n I knows I kin sell," he said. "I can't afford to 'ave sour beer on me 'ands. Perhaps your reverence'll 'ave some cider?"

But the cider was rough, and it set my teeth on edge and my stomach rebelled.

Jim and Collins—to say nothing of Longshanks—were now much downcast because their joke had robbed me of a drink. Not so the landlord, who seemed to be a most unpleasant fellow.

"Don't 'ee like it?" he demanded, with some truculence. "'Tis good cider."

"No doubt," I answered, "but I'm not used to it."

"I can't take it back," the landlord said, hastily.

"'Is reverence didn't ask 'ee to," Jim reproved him, mildly.

"If so be as you're thirsty, Father," Collins said, "I'll get me bike and go over to Dobwell fer some ale fer ye. I——"

"By no means," I assured him. "I wouldn't dream of it."

But Jim urged Collins to go, whereupon, despite my protests, the good fellow lumbered out. I gave him half a crown and told him to spend it all.

"'Tis daft," commented the landlord.

"Better be daft than mean," said Jim, pointedly. "If you weren't so domned close, Ned 'Askins, there wouldn't be no shortage o' ale."

"That's enough, Jim," the landlord warned him.

I was about to interpose and beg for peace, when Jim changed the subject.

"My boy, Tom, 'ave j'ined the Arzoos," he told Ned, the landlord.

Ned gaped at him. "Arzoos?" he mumbled.

"Yes; 'e be a sojer now," Jim went on. "He——"

He broke off as the taproom door opened. As pretty a wench as you could wish to see stood on the threshold.

"'Ullo, Betty, my gal!" Jim greeted her. "I've got some news for ye. Tom 'ave j'ined the Arzoos."

Apparently Ned had meanwhile been wrestling with the strange word, and now enlightenment had come to him.

"'Tis the 'Ussars 'e do mean, Bet," he sneered. "'E a'n't got no eddication, 'e 'a'n't. Feyther and son, they be both alike."

"You mean Tom's a sojer?" the girl exclaimed, looking at Jim, her hands clasped.

But Jim was too intent on scowling at Ned to answer her.

To my surprise, Longshanks now joined in. "Education is as education does," he misquoted, quietly. "Personally, I think Tom ought to be as proud of his father as his father is of him."

Now while I was glad that Longshanks had taken up cudgels on the smith's behalf and was trouncing the unpleasant Ned, I could not see his purpose—at least, not immediately.

Betty's eyes were shining. "Tom a sojer!" she murmured. Then: "Where's he now?" she asked.

"I don't rightly know," Jim answered. "Mebbe in Lunnon. I didn't notice the address on 'is letter to 'is ma."

"Course you didn't," sneered Ned. "You can't read!" And before the enraged Jim could reply he went on: "Any'ow, I be better'n a sojer, for I'm startin' a mooseum."

"Moos——?" began Jim, doubtfully. "Wot's that?"

"There y'are," exclaimed Ned, triumphantly, to the girl. "I told ye he wadn't eddicated. A mooseum," he explained, ponderously, "is a sort o' place where you 'as curiosities, like Roman remains."

"Have you got some Roman remains?" Longshanks asked him.

"Aye; that I 'ave," Ned declared.

"Where did you get 'em?" Jim demanded, weakly.

"Dug 'em up in me garden," Ned grinned. "A man come to see 'em from Andover yes'day. 'E said they was genuine an' wanted to buy 'em. 'Not me,' says I. 'I be goin to put 'em in my barn and charge folks sixpence to see 'em.' Plenty of people passes this way in the summer. I ought to make me fortune." He looked slily at Betty. "You don't make no fortunes in the army," he added.

Betty was plainly impressed and, in a flash, I understood what the situation was. Ned and Jim's Tom, the Hussar, were rivals for Betty's hand. Tom had scored a temporary advantage by gaining a uniform, but Ned's claim to her favour was now strong.

"We best be goin', Feyther," Jim said to me. "When Collins comes back wi' the beer you can 'ave it in the smithy. The landlord o' this 'ouse," he went on, scowling at Ned, "be too close-fisted to let you drink it 'ere."

"I came to see you about dad's mare, Mr. Strong," Betty said to him. "When I found you weren't in the smithy I thought you'd be 'ere." She dimpled delightfully. "Can you shoe 'er 's'aft'noon?"

(*please turn to page* **22**)

"That I can, lass," Jim answered. "Tell yer dad to bring er' along arter two."

Longshanks and I went back to the smithy with Jim. Collins arrived, out of breath, a few minutes later with the beer he had brought from Dobwell.

So much did we like this pleasant village, that Longshanks and I were minded to bide there several days. We were influenced not a little in this decision by our liking for Jim, the smith, and by our desire that he should win the battle for his absent son who, we felt, was probably very much like him and, therefore, a worthier husband for the pretty Betty than the unpleasant landlord, Ned.

Collins offered us accommodation at his cottage and this we gladly accepted.

Next morning there was a roughly painted notice board outside the inn. It bore the legend: "Museum of Roman Remains. Admission 6d." We squandered a shilling on a visit to the barn and inside we were shown half a dozen fragments of broken pottery, which may have been Roman, and a coin—a *denarius*—which undoubtedly was.

Thereafter we went to the smithy to report to Jim the result of our visit. The place was empty; the fire was out and the embers were cold. Through the weather boarding we heard the sound of laborious digging.

We found Jim at the back of the smithy, industriously delving among his cabbages—indeed, some of his cabbages lay uprooted. He was knee-deep in a hole.

"Going to Australia?" Longshanks greeted him, facetiously.

Jim paused in his labours to wipe sweat from his brow.

"No," he answered, gravely. "I'm looking for Roman remains."

Try as I might I could not repress a chuckle.

"What's the idea?" Longshanks grinned.

"If there be Roman remains in Ned's garden, belike there be in mine," said Jim, doggedly. "I a'n't goin' to 'ave me boy beat by a sour-faced, dog-gormed curmudgeon like 'im. I got a barn, an' I be goin' to fill it wi' Roman remains. While Tom be a-sojering I'll run it for 'im."

Longshanks and I were too much touched by Jim's devotion to his son to laugh. Thoughtfully we left him and went along the road. Not far beyond the village we saw Betty sitting on a field gate, Ned, the publican, standing alongside and speaking earnestly. She smiled shyly at us as we passed them, but Ned was too intent on what he was doing to observe us.

The rest of the morning passed without incident. That afternoon, when we had done full justice to a steak-and-kidney pudding which Mrs. Collins had made especially in our honour, Longshanks told me that I looked weary and that I should lie down.

And in truth I did feel tired. I said that this was due to our having tramped so far yesterday, but Longshanks unkindly said that it was more likely that I had eaten too much pudding. I was too sleepy to argue with him.

I seated myself in an easy chair by the window and, under the influence of the hot sun, I soon fell into a dose. Indeed, I must have slept properly, for it was late in the afternoon when I awakened—no doubt roused by the pleasant clatter of tea-cups in the kitchen adjoining.

Longshanks, said Mrs. Collins, had gone out—had been absent, indeed, for two hours.

I ate my tea in solitude. Because of Longshanks' absence, I was not a little apprehensive, for Longshanks gets into mischief at the slightest provocation or excuse and I went out, therefore, after the meal to search for him. Instinct took me to the smithy.

The hole that Jim had started to dig that morning was now enormous, but Jim was not therein; neither was he digging elsewhere in his garden. I found him in the smithy. But he was not at work. Instead, he stood, rapt in contemplation, before a large object which lay on his anvil and the nature of which, because of the darkness of the place, I could not discover.

"Good afternoon, Jim," I called from the door. "Have you seen Longshanks?"

He started and turned. Then he beckoned.

"Come in, Feyther," he bade me in a hoarse whisper and, pointing to the object on the anvil: "What d'ye think o' that?" he asked in a hushed voice. "I dug it up out o' me garden."

To my horror I saw that the object was an enormous skull. It appeared to be that of an animal of sorts, maybe of a horse, though the horse must have been of prodigious size.

"What is it?" I asked.

"'Tis a dragon's skull," Jim told me, in an impressive voice. There was no smile on his face and it was plain that he believed what he said.

"A—a drag——?" I began, weakly.

"Aye, 'tis a dragon's skull, right enough," he interrupted me. "Longshanks says so, an' 'e be an eddicated man, a'n't 'e?"

I swallowed hard in an effort to control my amusement. Then I thought how cruel Longshanks was to deceive this simple and honest countryman and I became an-angered.

"Where *is* Longshanks?" I demanded.

"'E went off somewheers," Jim answered. "I don't rightly know we'er. 'E told me to say nothin' to nobody—not till 'e comed back."

"You've told me," I pointed out.

"You're different, Feyther," said the smith, simply. Whereat I had to chuckle again, knowing full well that it was of me Longshanks had been chiefly thinking when he had enjoined secrecy.

"Are you going to start a museum?" I asked.

"No," he answered. "Longshanks says 'e's got a better plan nor that."

In deep thought and much puzzled, I left the smithy and wandered about the roads searching aimlessly for my friend. I suppose that it was about half-past six o'clock when I made my way back to the village. There seemed to be a phenomenal number of people about, and attention was focused on the inn, so that I was impelled to go to the taproom window and peer inside. I saw Longshanks at once. He was standing with Jim and about a dozen other men were with them. The landlord was scowling through the hatchway, what time Longshanks addressed the assembled company.

". . . It's an old legend that's attached to dead dragons," he was saying. "A very old legend to the effect that if the teeth are sown in good soil, armed soldiers will grow from them."

"All lies!" snorted Ned, the landlord.

"Maybe," Longshanks assented, amiably. "If Jim wants to prove that this is a dragon's head he'd better try it. He and I will go out this evening together and find a suitable spot."

"D'you mean to say," one of the company demanded, incredulously, "that sojers'll grow out o' dragon's teeth?"

"That's what the legend says," Longshanks affirmed. "Of course," he added, speciously, "that doesn't necessarily mean that they'll grow exactly where the teeth are sown; it just means that they'll appear on the scene miraculously."

"I don't believe it," sneered Ned. "'Tis all poppycock."

"Well, we'll see," said Longshanks affably, and he and Jim moved towards the door. Discreetly I slipped away, both amused and indignant that Longshanks should thus take advantage of these honest villagers' credulity.

It was not till after dark that I saw him again. I was reading in the Collins' cottage when he arrived. Sheepishly he sat down and remarked that it had been a nice day.

"There's a full moon to-night," I said, slily. "Some folk sow seeds during the full moon. Maybe that's what you've been doing!" But this remark Longshanks appeared not to hear.

The climax of the episode came at half-past eleven next morning. Collins, who had been over to Dobwell to buy some chickens, entered the smithy while Longshanks and I were talking to Jim.

"Jim," Collins announced in an awed voice, "they be growed a'ready! *The heath's full o' sojers!*"

The heath! We all stared at him. And then I remembered that when we had come to this place we had seen lorry-loads of hut-sections being dumped on common land just outside. As enlightenment came to me, I looked at Longshanks, but he just grinned and put a finger to his lips warningly.

"I knowed it'd work!" breathed Jim. He showed no real amazement and I marvelled at his faith and thought that it deserved a better object. "Let's go and tell Ned," he said, soberly, though his eyes were shining.

We moved out of the smithy. "What made you guess those huts were for soldiers?" I asked Longshanks, in an undertone, when I could get near him.

"It wasn't all guessing," he whispered back. "I went up to the heath last evening to make sure."

I still couldn't see how this apparent miracle could benefit Jim, however. Longshanks grinned more widely when I asked him.

"Surely finding a dragon's head is going one better than finding Roman remains, isn't it?" he asked. "And undoubtedly this must have been a dragon's head, seeing the result it has brought about."

Shaking my head, I left the smithy with the others and went over to the inn. At the taproom door, Collins, after a whispered conversation with Jim, mounted his bicycle and pedalled rapidly off. The rest of us entered the inn.

"Where has Collins gone?" I asked Jim, while the sour-faced Ned was drawing some ale.

"Gone to fetch Betty," chuckled Jim.

Ned brought the drinks.

"'Ow's the dragon's teeth?" he sneered at Jim. "'Ave they germinated yet?"

I could see that Jim was about to answer triumphantly, but before he could do so the door opened. On the threshold stood a soldier!

"Tom!" shouted the smith, in amazed surprise.

And: "*Tom!*" cried a girl's voice outside.

The young man wheeled round. "Hullo, Bet!" he said, grinning.

Puzzled by this sudden appearance of the smith's son, I looked at Longshanks. His face was a picture of astonishment.

"Bless my soul!" he murmured, incredulously.

"Hullo, dad!" said Tom, belatedly, to the smith. "Bit surprising this, a'n't it? Regiment's bein' mechanised and we've bin sent down 'ere fer trainin'."

Longshanks quickly recovered his composure. "Tom," he said solemnly, "do you know that you're of the brood of the dragon?"

For a moment Tom stared. But he had other matters claiming his attention. His arm tightened round Betty and as she turned to smile up at him, Ned appeared at the serving hatch. He saw Tom and he saw Betty's smile. He dropped the pewter pot he was carrying and the liquor spilled to the floor.

The flood of profanity that came from his lips was truly shocking.

"Johnson's had a nice offer from the Walt Disney studios!"

AMATEURS TAKE THE AIR

BY VINCENT BROME

FULFILLING the findings of our modern psychological seers, Sheila Cooldens was known publicly for her quiet self-possession, while in private she became a person volatile and full of temperament. As she sat now before this array of gleaming wires, her face was alight with excitement. She listened, rapt, while a faint voice, periodically drowned in the tide of atmospherics, began again.

"Yes, Sheila, the old man's a great guy, but heck, if only he'd stop covering such a large acreage of paper with his writings. Tells me he's on a book now. I asked him was it one of these *ali*-biographies—and he did get red! Still, he's certainly got what it takes. Are you still listening, darling? . . . But you must be. . . . Now about your letters, Sheila."

The even American voice went wandering on for nearly fifteen minutes and not once did Sheila dare to move in case she missed a word. Sheila sat in New York. Frank C. Sermand was talking on the other side of the States, on San Diego Bay.

They had fallen heavily for each other through the medium of amateur transmitters and receivers. Six months before, wandering the amateur band on her short-wave set, Sheila had first heard snatches from Frank. Consumed with a desire to know more of this highly amusing talker, she persuaded her father to buy a small transmitter. Within a month the pair were exchanging what the amateur broadcasters call their QSL cards. In the patois used by amateurs QSL means "will you please acknowledge reception by post." They then exchange call signs of their different stations and can quickly distinguish who is talking.

Sermand finally paid a visit to New York and took Sheila back as his bride. They added one of the first streaks of romance to the annals of amateur broadcasting.

Great fellows these baby broadcasters in America, much given to putting the interests of the race before their own individual achievements, and turning to splendid purpose their own tiny voices in times of distress or national emergency.

There are 2,200 transmitting amateurs in Great Britain, and another 2,000 working with artificial aerials. Their interests are watched by the Radio Society of Great Britain, an organisation which this year celebrates its twenty-fifth anniversary.

They gave a dinner in London recently for old-timers of amateur transmitting. Gerald Marcuse took the chair because his private experiments paved the way to Empire broadcasting.

With licences increasing at the rate of 400 a year, the work of the R.S.G.B. becomes increasingly important. Actually, the job of the amateur transmitter is to experiment, and organised experimenting has already produced excellent results. Anyone can join the ranks of Britain's amateurs.

First you must convince the Post Office that you are a bona fide experimenter. That entitles you to a licence for "closed circuit" work, meaning that your apparatus will be capable only of sending signals a few yards. Later, you qualify for a full licence and call sign. In many cases, dependent upon your objects and knowledge, it is possible to get a full licence immediately.

For four years, Mr. H. Harding, a keen wireless amateur, of Ebbw Vale, has supplied some five hundred subscribers with radio programmes by means of a relay system. Mr. Harding, with the help of his wife, operates the system. His receiving station is erected on an old colliery tip and programmes are picked up, amplified and supplied on overhead wires to the subscribers, who only need a loudspeaker

The Post Office stipulates that every amateur transmitter must be able to send and receive Morse at the rate of twelve words a minute, so that he will quickly recognise an SOS message, and immediately clear the air.

All this may sound a little intimidating, but the Post Office must step warily with this business. Already, the private transmitter abroad has become something of a menace.

Partisans of this or that extreme political cult have found the radio-transmitter a most useful device for disseminating their creed through the solar system. Propaganda pollutes the air; religious, fascist, communistic, charitable, most of it lacking the saving grace of humour. Solid, serious stuff they talk, pouring it out as though with some divine conviction.

Most of it is illegal, but since the authorities abroad seem to find some difficulty in checking up on private stations, they continue to flourish in their small way.

Definitely a hero among them is the gallant German who broadcasts the most terrible indictments of Nazi-ism from Berlin night after night. There is something more than sheer vain glory in his unfailing peroration, "If you don't hear me tomorrow night, ladies and gentlemen, you will know what has happened. . . . I hope you will observe a two minutes' silence in my memory . . ."

The British Post Office naturally wants to prevent the possibility of this political propaganda being broadcast, and for this, and several other reasons, amateur transmitters must not be used for transmitting political or commercial messages. In fact, British amateurs are confined to technical talk about their sets, with occasional jokes at the expense of the weather. Personal messages or news are definitely tabooed.

Already the activities of radio "hams," as these amateurs are called, have been much-maligned, but they are working towards a great end that may one day prove a tremendous value. The Army, Air Force and Fleet have already invited their co-operation for certain tests. During the flooding of the Fen district again, the Hams were organised when other forms of communication had failed.

If some crazy country should create the spark of war in Europe again, the radio Ham would immediately come into his own. When telephone and

telegraph wires are broken, the amateur transmitter, under direction from the Government through the Radio Society of Great Britain, could easily provide a first-class means of communication.

That actually happened in Spain at the beginning of the war. Until recently, revolutionaries have always tried to grab arsenals, fortresses or similar strategic points. To-day they make for wireless transmitters. The first place occupied by the Spanish insurgents was a wireless station.

Amateur sets were commandeered, and with all these different voices it would not have been difficult to gull the public into believing that this particular revolution was the most successful in the world, even had it been on the point of collapse.

Perhaps your radio-complex doesn't drive so hard that you must needs hurry out and buy yourself all the paraphernalia necessary for constructing a home transmitter. But why not try listening to the amateur? All you need for that is a short-wave set ranging the amateur band of twenty to forty metres. Equipped with such a set, you may hit upon the most fascinating fragments from all over the world.

Perhaps a snatch of conversation from Franco's front-line broadcasters will come your way. Floodtime in Pennsylvania may bring you the hurried, high-pitched voice of an amateur in the flood area, talking to prevent life-and-death delays.

Wireless has brought new magics into the routine lot of work-a-day folk and the amateur transmitter is something comparatively new and completely fascinating, beginning to take on new significance every month.

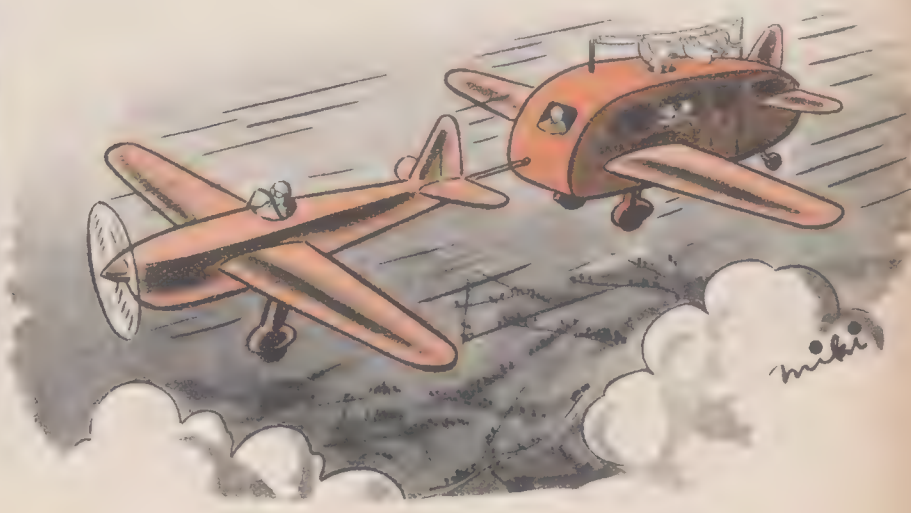
Laugh

The "PASSING SHOW

"I asked them for some old clothes."

"He used to be on the stage and he can't resist the lure of the footlights!"

"Binks, who gave you permission to sign your work?"

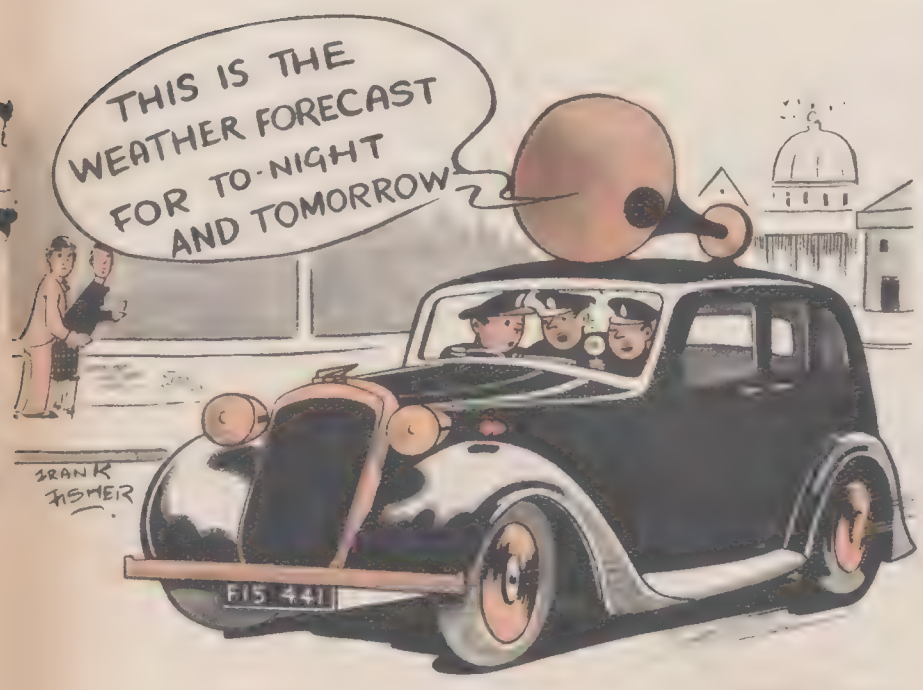


The owner-pilot chooses a caravan holiday.

...kter

...W" Smile Section

" Thanks, Chum! "



" He can't forget he was once a radio announcer! "

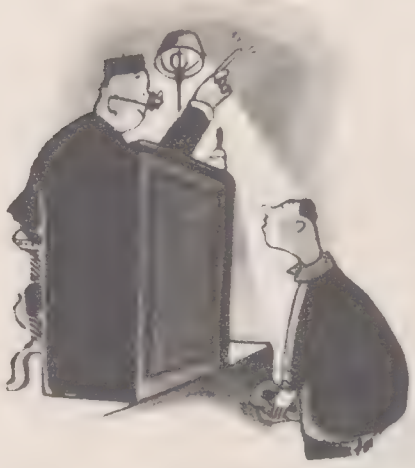
" I told him not to dive while the boat was rolling! "

" Dickory can't realise we're mechanised."

A MAN HURRIED

by A. C. BARRETT.

LAUGH WITH THE WORLD



"Twenty shillings fine."
"I am so poor, could you not make it less?"
"What are you?"
"A draper."
"Then I will make it nineteen shillings and elevenpence three farthings."

"Oh, no, it's nothing serious. Just cut myself shaving!"

CONFIDENCE MAN

CAMEO STORY

BY CORMAC SWAN

MR. WILLIS was feeling pleased with himself. And hadn't he a perfect right to be? He had just brought off a deal that would bring in some hundred pounds into his firm, and a nice bonus for himself. He whistled a few notes, swung his umbrella jauntily, and turned his blue suited, pin-striped self into the park.

In the distance he could see the scarlet uniforms of the band of the Grenadier Guards. The sun glinted on their instruments and soft strains of music stole across the green turf. He made in that direction.

At just about the same time a certain benevolent gentleman, known to the police as the "Bird," passed through another entrance into Hyde Park.

The Bird was a confidence man and a very gentlemanly one at that. He always, he said, gave value for money. His line of talk was at least worth the money involved, and his shares in various ventures poems of artistic skill.

He also was pleased with himself. Had he not sold a very select line in dud tin mines to a wealthy visitor from the Balkans. Yes, it had been a profitable morning.

He put his hands beneath his coat tails and strutted into the park; his head bobbed forward with each step and he hopped from foot to foot, more like a bird than ever.

It was almost wholly chance that made him sit down beside young Mr. Willis. At the same time, the Bird was always ready to do business. He had noted the look of supreme self-satisfaction on the young man's face. Experience had taught him that people who were pleased with themselves were always fair game. He had noted, too, the well-fed and well-dressed appearance of Mr. Willis. He thought, "Ah! money."

The Bird soon started up a conversation. Soon elicited the fact that Mr. Willis had acquired a fat bonus. Then launched forth in his extra special line of talk.

"How nice to be wealthy. To be free. Think of all the people stewing in the heat. Only few of us can idle and be cool." He waved his hand airily. ". . . ourselves, these few people and the children, rich people's children. Don't you wish you could do something for the poor people's children?"

"Ah, I do indeed!"

At this point a somnolent individual sitting behind the two began to take a lively interest in their conversation. There was something very familiar about the benevolent gentleman, and something more familiar about his talk.

"Now," continued the Bird, "I have been left a sum of money, quite a large sum, to devote to any charity I consider deserving. It is a great chance, a chance to those poor people, the lame, the sick. Of course, I must be discerning, you understand. . .?"

Here the person sitting behind recognised the benevolent gentleman. Not so long ago he himself had parted with a large sum of money, to show his faith in a public-spirited cause. He got up quietly and went in search of a policeman.

He had not far to go and the ambitious young policeman thought he recognised the Bird from description.

They went back to the camp chairs, and the policeman's suspicions proved correct.

"Aha!" he said to the Bird. "At it again, are you?"

He turned to Mr. Willis.

"I must inform you, sir, that you are talking to a notorious confidence trickster. No doubt he has been extorting money from you?"

For once in his life the Bird seemed flustered and ashamed.

"As a matter of fact," said Mr. Willis, "I have just sold this gentleman a refrigerator. I'm a salesman, you know. Always believe in making a deal when I have the opportunity."

He waved a catalogue.

"Here I have a list of models ranging from £25 to £500. They are invaluable in this weather . . . iced beer, ice cream. Think of all the people stewing in the heat. Only the few can keep cool . . . rich people, rich people's children. This brings it before the multitude . . . the poor, poor people's children. . . ."

He handed the catalogue to the policeman.

"Perhaps I can interest you," he said. "One of our Junior Models, perhaps?"

"You have so many debts—how can you sleep at night?"

"Oh, that is easy—the creditors always come in the daytime."—*Kignigen, Oslo.*

"Do you think married people become so alike that they tnink alike?"

"Rather—just at this moment my wife is thinking what she will say to me when I arrive home late—and I am thinking of the same thing."—*Dobry Wieczor, Warsaw.*

TAKE IT AS RED

BY D. M. B. COLLIER
ILLUSTRATED BY SHEILA STUART ROBERTSON

In the index book he discovers the very shade of pale pink blossom and a code cable to England ensures him that the silk will be the same colour

IF a Chinese merchant sends a bale of silk to England to be dyed, how can he be sure that he is going to get the exact colour he has in mind? Suppose, for example, that the silk is already in England and that he has not yet made up his mind about the colour he wants.

He walks in his gardens, admiring the flowers, and suddenly sees a lovely, pale pink blossom. If he could only have that shade, all the girls in Peking would want his silk.

Going into his office, he takes from a shelf what appears to be a book that opens concertina fashion, like a folder. His thin finger runs down the margin, next to which are inset squares of ribbon. Ah! Here it is, the very colour.

His knowledge of English is not sufficiently good to understand "Blossom Pink," but *B.C.C.* 34 in a cable will ensure that his silk returns to him, exactly that shade.

He has been using the dictionary of standard colour, issued by the British Colour Council, which has come to fill the needs of people all over the world, who are in a similar position to our Chinese friend.

Many years of research have gone to its making. After it had been decided which colours to include and what to call them, difficulty was experienced in matching materials of different textures. When these preliminary stages were overcome, silk, wool, rubber and even leather could be manufactured to match exactly.

It must always be remembered, however, that dull materials absorb more light, and for this reason silk and wool of the same shade vary in sheen. The Council has made allowances for this in the dictionary, which contains 220 colours and shades, shown with a shiny and with a matt (dull) surface. An additional dictionary is provided for the woollen trade, showing the 220 colours in yarns.

This number of colours by no means exhausts the list that might be provided, but it is considered sufficient for ordinary use. "Seasonal" shades that come in between the "standard" colours and are not repeated, are given in an additional list.

Obviously every textile manufacturer may not wish to make use of all the standard colours at the same time. And to assist the trade, extensive research is made to discover what new seasonal colours are likely to be most popular.

All kinds of tendencies are taken into consideration. Last year, the Chinese Exhibition resulted in a predominance of green. First of all, before the exhibition, those in authority were assured that the lovely tones of the jade to be shown would attract widespread notice. In consequence, those shades were put forward. Then, the following season, shades slightly off the jade tones were employed.

Nine months before the Coronation, "season" colours were chosen. It was felt that a contrast to red, white and blue would be required so Coronation gold, St. James's pink and Viking blue were selected.

Immediately after being chosen, a new colour is first handled by the dyers, who compose a recipe for the dye. Then the chemists, who work in close co-operation with the Council, test the colour, exposing it under strong daylight lamps, for twenty-four hours.

After all this, the colours are handed on to the manufacturers and finally in the form of materials or clothing, are dealt with by the wholesalers.

It is not difficult to understand how thousands of pounds can be saved by employing a standard colour dictionary. It does not matter much if you and your wife cannot agree about the real colour of azure blue, but if a manufacturer asks for azure when he means sea blue, he may have to foot a big bill.

To obviate such difficulties, every one of the 220 colours has its own number and code word. By this means, the Chinese merchant can wire to London for 50 yards of "sea haze" crepe-de-chine. He will run no risk of the shade being other than what he wants.

Women will also welcome any system enabling them to match one kind of goods with another. Most women have had difficulty in finding a hat, a bag, a scarf to match a dress.

Now all these can be chosen easily with the aid of the standard dictionary. Charts showing graduation of tones are supplied to all manufacturers who need guidance.

There may be some opposition from the exclusive designers, to a standardisation of colours, but they have their own remedy. By purchasing white materials they can have them dyed in a unique shade to please a special customer. These designers create only for the few and do not touch the majority, who are constantly faced with the problem of matching items both of clothing and of household goods.

That is why the Council wants to extend this idea beyond textiles. In cosmetics, for example, peach, naturelle and rachel should mean similar tones in every make. Yet I have found many women who were afraid to try a new make of powder because of the difficulty of getting the right tone.

Household paints and distempers, too, should come under this scheme. Several of our Dominions and Colonies have been searching for a plan of this kind to apply for foodstuffs. Australian sultanas were found to change colour after packing. This led to some confusion, because although the producers invoiced them as light golden, the wholesalers here received them as rich brown. Now the extent of the change has been checked by the colour chart.

Horticulturists have long felt the need for a standard nomenclature of colours. The Council of the Royal Horticultural Society appointed a committee n 1935 to examine the matter, in co-operation with Mr. Robert Wilson, Art Director of the British Colour Council. As a result, arrangements have been made to publish a Horticultural Chart.

It was hoped to get this chart out early this year, but publication has been held up because of the enormous amount of research work needed. In the first volume, 100 colours will be classified, each with four tones. The second volume will bring the number up to 800.

In this case, there will be no code but the names of the colours will be given in English, French, German, Dutch, Italian and Spanish. Where the colour corresponds to a colour represented in the Repertoirs de Couleurs in Ridgeway's or Ostwald's colour standards, a reference to this effect will be given.

On each plate, illustrating a certain colour, a note will be given of some well-known plant or flower of that colour. In cases where the translations are insufficient, it will not matter, because, as in the case of textiles, there will be a number.

So, if any gardener or explorer from China to Peru, finds a new plant or produces a new flower, he will be able to send an exact description of its colours to any horticultural centre he wishes.

Horticultural societies, also, will be saved the extra work of replying to people who write saying they have a daffodil of a totally different colour from any ever grown hitherto. By referring to the chart, the Society will be able to judge the truth of the claim without further trouble.

Finally, colour has entered the business world. It is used to index stock and to indicate the ability of salesmen. One of the big railway companies has a colour system to give a "bird's-eye" view of the position in the engine shops and coloured cards showing the progress of every repair job that is being undertaken.

"Like hell he will!" she said. "Get an eyeful of this, Mr. Smart Aleck, with your great handling of propositions"

BLACK

HOWARD STEPHENSON had a nightmare feeling that he had been allotted a familiar part in a play and had to go through with it, lines and actions, whether he would or no.

"The beauty of it is," Bewley said, "you're rich enough not to miss it. We're letting you off light." He smirked and passed his hand back over his fair, wavy hair in that annoying way he had.

Stephenson hated him. It was only in films that everybody seemed to carry revolvers as a matter of course. Just as well. If he had had a gun in his pocket he would have shot Bewley without compunction, for he was more detestable than any crawling reptile. The world rid of him would be a better place. But then Justice would say citizens could not take the law into their own hands. So he could do nothing save sit there in the cheap café, savage and afraid.

"Let's go through it, for the last time," Bewley said. "You really ought to realise how fairly I'm treating you. Here are you, the managing director of a big concern, wealthy and with everything in the world a man could want; married, a nice family, every chance of getting into Parliament. You'd think a man would be satisfied with that. Instead, what do you do? Just because my sister's poor and works for you, just because she's young and innocent and beautiful, you set out deliberately to ruin her."

Stephenson gave a smothered groan and drummed angrily on the table. "For the tenth time," he said, "I tell you I did nothing of the sort. I took her to Brighton only because my real secretary was ill. I wanted her solely for business reasons. I told her just what she'd have to do and that she needn't come if she didn't want to. She said she'd be delighted and there it was."

"Yes," Bewley said, "and what if she hadn't happened to mention to me, her brother, about you taking her away like that? What if I hadn't been fond enough of her to follow her down there in case she needed help?"

"Nothing would have happened. You know that as well as I do."

Bewley wagged his head in virtuous reproach.

"And yet what sort of a scene was that when I burst into your room at the hotel? Lucky I was there when she screamed for help. I suppose it was all part of the job that half her clothes should be torn off, and you should struggle with her, too—well, we needn't go through that again."

"Yes," Stephenson said, "it was all part of the job, all right. I know a man in a position such as you've put me in looks and acts like a fool, but I'm not quite mad, Bewley."

"Mister Bewley to you."

"I say I'm not quite mad. I know now I laid myself wide open to a plot like yours. I was a sitting shot. But how was I to guess that? I thought she was a respectable girl."

"And so she was till she met you."

"If that were so, you wouldn't be here."

"That's just why I am. You can't deny you ripped off——"

"I was coming to that. She was in my room taking dictation in a perfectly normal way. Suddenly she had what I took at the time to be a kind of fit, tore her dress, flung herself on my lap. It was at an agreed time and her scream was your signal. That's the whole story."

"Your story, you mean. But do you think it's a convincing one for a single moment?"

"It's the truth."

"Who'll believe you? If you swore to it until you were blue in the face they'd take our words against yours—particularly the word of a

Old Joe, temporary postman, trudged on wearily in the rain, the rest of his round stretched before him. Surely twelve hours delay in delivery could do no harm? He would take the remaining letters home until morning. But when he got there they held a strange promise of new life

BY DALE COLLINS

ILLUSTRATED BY M. McKINLEY

MAIL!

pretty girl like my sister. Juries are that way."

Stephenson made no answer. He stirred restlessly on his chair, feeling trapped and powerless. Even supposing his denials found acceptance some of the mud would always stick. For the few who absolutely believed in his innocence there'd be hundreds to recall there was never smoke without fire. He could not afford to have that—least of all at the moment. The mere breath of scandal would ruin him. He had done well with his life and a seat in Parliament had seemed another and worthy step forward.

But let this slimy villain and his doll of a sister spit out their poisonous lies and where were his chances? People would remember, with nasty grins, all the jokes about business men and their typists, and there'd be plenty who'd be glad enough to see the magnate punished for the wrong he had done to a helpless employee. It would be another proof that in this country, thank goodness, there was not one law for the rich and another for the poor.

"Blackmail!" he said. "That's what it is, and there's no lower crime."

"Blackmail's a nasty word," Bewley said, with the ominous quiet of one who knows the strength of his position. "I wouldn't use nasty words like that if I were in a jam like you are, Mr. Stephenson. Wouldn't do for you to put my back up, you know."

"I'll—I'll go to the police." But he had said that before, and he had not gone. Nothing now could make it other than the bluster of weakness.

"It's not you who'll go to the police, but me. Listen, Mr. Stephenson, I don't want you to be silly and make bad worse. The more you refuse to see reason the harder you make it for yourself. If you're prepared to compensate my sister for the harm you've done her and the job she's had to lose, the whole thing's finished. Think what a weight off your mind that'll be. All I'm asking you to do is put up a thousand pounds to give her a fresh start, and then you can forget all about this."

"But why should I have to compensate her for what I haven't done? If she'd been what she professed to be she could still be working for me."

Bewley put out his cigarette with great deliberateness and, face grave and reproachful, leaned forward.

"Because I thought you'd be quick enough to see which side your bread's buttered. I've been trying to spare you the worst of it, Mr. Stephenson, but I see now you'll have to be told. I wasn't able to get down to Brighton until the second day, was I? You know all about what happened before I arrived. I'll admit it came as a shock to me when I found out for the first time to-day, but it seems my sister was too ashamed to tell me before. You had her at your mercy, didn't you? She was only a simple girl and her job meant a lot to her. That gave you a powerful lever, didn't it?"

"What are you talking about?"

"It's a surprise that I found out, eh? You thought, because in the light of day she saw what a fool she'd been and put up a struggle, she'd never breathe a word to a soul about that first night. Perhaps, at that, it might have been a safe bet, because my sister's the kind of girl who would not want to speak even to me of something terrible like that happening to her. But she's had to tell me, see?" He paused so that the next words would sink in. "Here's why she had to tell me—she's going to have a baby."

Stephenson tried to burst into angry speech, but no words came. He sat rigid, face white, a pulse throbbing in his brow. His hands clenched convulsively, and a new fear and a new horror looked out of his eyes.

"I swear I know nothing——!" he forced out, hotly.

Bewley sliced through his denial with a contemptuous sideways motion of his hand. "Swear until you choke, but what good does it do you? Wouldn't any man who's done what you've done have to deny it? Doesn't the fact that she's in trouble make it ten times worse for a man not to be a man and admit straight out that he's responsible? I can call a hundred witnesses to my sister's character. Why, she's never even had a boy friend. Who's more likely to have led her astray than a boss who takes a bit of a kid down to Brighton by herself and's caught up to his pranks by her brother? You think over those points for a bit, Mr. Stephenson. I won't interrupt you."

Stephenson thought over them and cold shivers ran on him. Bewley lit another cigarette and sat back comfortably. Black looks could not kill him, and decent citizens did not carry revolvers. Stephenson longed to smash his fist into that smirking face, but what use would that have been? It would only have served to precipitate matters. To appear in a police court on an assault charge would be a fine prelude to the rest. Even though it were no more true than all the rest, this latest allegation made everything worse a thousandfold; more sordid, more terrifying.

Eyes sardonic and knowing, Bewley watched him. Stephenson had heard of men's faces being like masks in moments of crisis, but he could not hide his anguish and dismay.

He was sick and tired of the whole revolting business, these vile meetings, this sense of being powerless and at the mercy of the ruthless reptile on the other side of the dirty table. In truth, what was a thousand pounds compared to freedom from it all? His peace of mind would have been cheap at any price. It would be folly to wreck his life by a stubborn insistence on the fact that he was an innocent man.

"I still deny every charge and every word you've said," he declared, "but suppose I agree to give you this money you demand—how do I know I've heard the last of you for good and all? Your sort are never satisfied. Once having got the better of me you'd be sure of your power and I'd never know any peace."

"Come," said Bewley, quite gaily, "that's more the way a man of business ought to talk. I knew you'd see the light. How are you to know that I'll play straight with you? That's easy. If you do the right thing by her, if she gets justice, you'll never hear another word from us. You can take my word of honour on that."

"God help me," said Stephenson, from the bottom of his heart.

"No sneering now, when I'm being so fair," Bewley rebuked. "Why I might have asked five thou', or ten, and got it. But I didn't want to be hard on you. And here's something to cheer you up. Things being as they are, my sister can't stay in England. It'd break her old mother's heart. You're going to let us have the money by to-morrow night and I'll take her abroad next morning."

"You promise that?"

"Promise? I'll swear it. And here, take a look at these!" He brandished two green books of travel tickets, but was careful not to show their destination.

"Well, then——" Stephenson said, despising himself for the surrender.

"That's the stuff. Now here's what you've to do. I'm not going to have any handing over of notes and detectives popping out. You might lose your head and be silly. You'll draw the dough in pound notes and pack it up in a neat parcel. Then you'll send it to Robert Browning at 42 The Crescent——"

"But why Robert Browning?"

"One name's as good as another, isn't it?"

"And that's not your sister's address."

"Who said it was? We've got to protect ourselves against a man like you, haven't we? And you needn't mark the notes, because they won't be changed in England. And don't register the packet. Now take down the address."

Stephenson did so, feeling almost as ashamed of himself as if he had been guilty.

Magda flicked ash on the carpet. It didn't matter, because they were going to-morrow and the landlord, who was in Denmark, would have enough to worry about in the two months' rent they owed him not to be upset about the state in which the flat had been left.

Magda was so fresh and youthful, it seemed right for her to be drinking ginger beer. That an equal part of gin was mixed with it did not coincide with the picture she presented to the world. Clear brows drawn together for once in a frown, she read the morning paper, which hadn't been opened before, except at the racing page.

Bert came in crossly, shaking the water from his hat. It was quite a walk on a wet night to the accommodation address of the little tobacconist in The Crescent. He did not look nearly as smug and self-assured as he had at his interview with Stephenson, on the previous day. Indeed, he slammed the door behind him, like a man shutting out possible pursuers and his eyes flickered uneasily.

"Well," he said, "I'd my trouble for nothing. Not a thing for Robert Browning. In fact, they hadn't any letters by the last post. Looks as if your boy friend will need a bit more taming, my angel."

His wife thrust her lower lip out at him in a way that would have surprised the other typists at Stephenson and Company's, who'd only known shy little Miss Bewley.

"Like hell he will!" she said. "A pity you couldn't have been quicker about your taming. If we'd got the sugar a week ago, as I said we should have, we'd have been clear by now. Get an eyeful of this, Mr. Smart Aleck, with your great handling of propositions."

She passed him the paper, stabbing her cigarette at the item which had creased her virginal forehead, and watched him scornfully while he read.

The piece of news was common enough. It makes frequent appearances in the press. But as

(*please turn over*)

"All these cold greasy dishes and N—O — — H—O—T w — a — t — e — r Ohoooooooooooooooo!"

who says there's no fun in the sink?

You hear much more singing over washing-up in these days. It comes from the happy people who have constant electric hot water in their kitchens. Away goes the grease in a cloud of steam, and when they look round for the next thing to wash—there isn't one! Because with *constant* hot water people wash up as they go along and there's no accumulation to deal with. No wonder they sing! Electric hot water's broken the back of the job. Wouldn't it be nice to have an electric water heater yourself? It is so easy and inexpensive to install and saves money all the time because an electric water heater cuts off current the instant it is not required. They will tell you all about it at your nearest electrical showrooms and you can have it at work in your home in next to no time

SAVES EXPENSE by automatically cutting off current when not in use

It's easy to have

ELECTRIC HOT WATER

ISSUED BY THE BRITISH ELECTRICAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION.
2 SAVOY HILL, LONDON, W.C.2

Bert read his damp face darkened and when he had done he flung the paper down with a curse.

"So you get it?" asked Magda, savagely.

"I get it all right."

At the Old Bailey a blackmailer had been sentenced to seven years. His woman accomplice got off lightly with three. His Honour had some scathing things to say about the crime, which he described as second only to murder, and he had expressed, again, judicial surprise that at the first menace the victims did not go straight to their friends, the police. He pointed out that the prosecutor had been protected throughout by being known as "Mr. A," had vindicated himself completely, and rendered a service to the community.

"I thought you might be able to puzzle it out, because it's not a hard one," Magda said. "You can imagine my boy friend reading that in his Mayfair home or in his Rolls. Does his little heart leap up? Does he hurry round to the bank to get the cash for Robert Browning? Does he?—my foot! He sees what he should have from the jump; that we've been bluffing and he has all the trumps. You needn't have troubled to get your precious feet wet. The only wonder is the cops aren't here yet. But maybe he's still shy and hasn't gone to Scotland Yard because he figures we'll see that, too, and have the sense to quit."

Bert nodded.

"And at that we do! Seven years for a thou' is sweated labour. Chuck the last of the things in the bags and we'll beat it to an hotel where we're not known. We can catch the train from there. Perhaps we'll have better luck in Paris. If we can't make something of a job as companion and chauffeur to a rich old dame we've lost the knack. Look lively! This town's no place for us. Do you think it'd be worth popping out to The Crescent in the morning, just in case it comes in the first post?"

"Listen, sap," said Magda, "if you're going near The Crescent to-morrow we're staying at different hotels to-night and you can use my ticket for a blonde, because I'll be off in the first plane, if it costs me my last quid. See?"

Bert saw.

Old Joe looked at the letters which lodged with him until he could deliver them in the morning. The diamond ring in his waistcoat pocket nestled against his ribs. It made him feel guilty and happy at the same time. But, after all, the thing had practically dropped out of the envelope. It might have gone astray at any stage. Of course, he wouldn't open any more letters. He wasn't a thief. The ring had been just a stroke of luck which had come the way of a poor man who'd needed it long enough. Think of the way his shoes leaked and how his rheumatism troubled him! Someone had not wanted that ring and it spelt comfort for him.

He felt for a cigarette, but the packet was empty. Queer to be worth more than he had been for many a day and yet not have a smoke. And he wasn't going out in that rain again, not likely! To take his mind off the matter, he turned over the contents of his bag. A packet for 42 The Crescent caught his eye. That was the tobacconist's. True, the shopkeeper's name wasn't Browning, and a lot of letters were delivered there to people who could not live on the small premises, but the address and cigarettes were associated in his mind. He often bought them there. On such a night, when a man was sickening for the 'flu, as likely as not, owing to being out in the rain all day for a paltry few shillings a week, it was too much to ask that he wouldn't help himself to a few smokes. Why, the man at forty-two had a whole shopful.

He opened the packet and sat stunned by the sight of a wad of bank notes. For a space he fingered them in incredulous wonder, and then started to count them automatically. Presently he grew tired of wetting his thumb and turning them over. Must be all of a thousand pounds on his table, sent unregistered and without a line or word to an accommodation address.

Joe sucked his grizzled wisp of moustache and glanced nervously about. He was all alone, and the plaster boy who ate a slice of melon on his mantle seemed to grin slyly at him.

"Looks to me, my lad, like I wasn't intended to be honest," Joe said. "Now did I have any idea there was money in the thing? But this is a sight better than penny pools."

Inspector Green did not yawn, though he might have been forgiven if he had.

"So there it is, Inspector," Stephenson said, mopping his brow. "I made up my mind, at last, to come to you. I haven't had a moment's peace since I sent the money. I realise now, of course, that I've put myself entirely in their power and they can bleed me for any amount. Each time I see a letter, each time the 'phone rings, I fear it's that man back again. Why, yesterday an acquaintance hailed me in the street and I nearly jumped out of my skin. His voice sounded just like Bewley's. I knew then I couldn't go on. I'm only sorry I didn't show more sense and spirit from the start and come to you immediately."

"Better late than never. I suppose they've vanished for the moment, but, of course, we'll try to pick them up. If you hear so much as a word from them, let me know immediately and do nothing until I've seen you."

"I'll promise that all right," Stephenson said, mopping some more, but looking infinitely relieved to have got the matter off his mind.

"It's a marvel to me that the public never learns," the Scotland Yard man said. "Blackmail's the easiest crime in the world to deal with these days. Why, on the very morning. . . ." He told the magnate about those proceedings at the Old Bailey.

"Isn't that just the way things go?" Stephenson said. "If I'd seen that, it would have saved me a thousand pounds and days and nights of misery. But I hadn't slept all night and I was late in the morning. I didn't have a chance to look at my paper."

"Play your ace, man!"

BLITE BACKS A LOSER

'Twas said that Farmer Nipsell never missed anything, not even a rabbit, along of them eyes in the back of his head, but handy-man Blite never did believe in that hearsay

BY S. L. BENSUSAN

ILLUSTRATED BY W. J. TURNER

"An' you don't wanter put y'r fistses up at me. Telly f'r why. I ain't done ye no hu't"

"TOUCHIN' them rabbits o' yourn, what you're smuddered in, Master," said Mr. James Blite, in his most insinuating tones, when he had spruced himself up and walked to Bydowns.

"What about 'em, Jim?" demanded Mr. Nipsell, owner of the farm, just as though he had never heard of such things.

"If you don't git 'em, somebody else will," prophesied Mr. Blite, "an' they're eatin' you out o' house an' home, fast as ever they can. You can't be in two places at once, an' you can't be out night as well as day. You want help along of 'em, that's what you want.

"It's like this here," continued Mr. Blite, "if I was to supply nets an' ferrets an' spades an' bring Boy Widger along o' me to help like, an' we was to share the rabbits atween us, that'd be wuth your while, an' I'd make it wuth mine. I don't want th' arth. You kin trust me, bein' I belong. I ain't no furriner, what bin an' come from nowheres, here to-day an' gone to-morrer, like. I got a good chara'ter an' right forward."

"I'll consider of it," said Mr. Nipsell, with the caution that is part of his make-up. "Call agen come Friday, this time. I kin make up me mind by then, it's likely."

A cautious man, he devoted a few minutes of that interval to close inquiries about the good chara'ter and found that the adjective was, as he thought, misleading.

"I've worked it all out," Mr. Nipsell announced, blandly, when Mr. Blite in a condition of well-suppressed excitement returned to hear the verdict, "an' I'll do ut. But I've written a bit o' paper twice, once f'r you an' once f'r me, so we kin keep a eye on each other. Then we shan't have no trouble along o' one another later on, if anything goo amiss. Not that there's any reason why things should go wrong between honest men."

The paper set out arrangements in detail. Mr. Blite was to start work at eight o'clock each morning and to come up to the Tithe Barn with his 'sistant at midday for dinner; he was to work from one till four and then return with the boy to the barn and leave rabbits, nets, ferrets and spades there, Mr. Nipsell undertaking to house the ferrets in a big hutch on the warm, south side of the barn and feed them free of charge. The rabbits were to be taken, in due course, to Market Waldron by Mr. Nipsell and sold for the partnership, at the best price obtainable.

As a right forward man, Mr. Blite felt that Mr. Nipsell showed little faith, but even after further remonstrance, Mr. Nipsell declined to show any more.

"Very well," said Mr. Blite. "I'll goo seek Boy Widger."

Boy Widger is large, strong, placid and slow-witted; he does not speak unless spoken to and then makes the briefest possible reply. He lives with an aunt who brought him up by heavy hand when his parents died. He does not drink, swear or smoke; he bears his aunt no ill will. Now the hand that brought him up is crippled with rheumatism, he does all her hard work and listens patiently when she explains how badly it is done and how much he owes her for the past unkindness she calls by another and more flattering name. She has lost her power to hurt, except with her tongue, but she does her best with that and it irks her to find that even speech is losing its power, as Boy Widger grows more and more stolid with the years.

Work started well. The day was fine, the moon was in her first quarter and rabbiting is always best then. At the end of the first day Mr. Blite bade Boy Widger leave four rabbits behind a gorse bush and see that he minded his business and obeyed orders. They carried the rest to the steading, on a long pole.

Three hours later, having had his tea and a rest and a smoke, he returned to the field where the bush showed a few golden flowers in the moonlight. The rabbits were not there and Mr. Blite's spine indulged in a cold shiver, which alarmed its owner. He rubbed his eyes but the friction brought no extended vision. To all outward seeming the rabbits had gone.

He walked down to Mrs. Pewter's cottage, for Mrs. Pewter is Boy Widger's aunt and as we should say he "same as inquired for him."

"He come back reg'lar wanked," said the lady scornfully. "Soon as ever he bin an' had his tea, he went to bed."

"Ded he?" said Mr. Blite.

"Took his boots off moment he got inter th' scullery an' never put 'em on agen," said Mrs. Pewter, scornfully. "He should say he done a power o' diggin', but there, boys ain't what they used to be. Show 'em a job o' work an' they're scat. I never did, all me born days."

On the following morning Boy Widger said, simply, he knew nothing of the rabbits; he had not touched them since he disposed of them as directed and he had not spoken to a soul. When evening came, Mr. Blite chose another shady and secluded corner and deposited six, to make up for his losses. He did not wait so long, just took his tea, smoked one pipe and sallied forth, to find no sign of the spoils. Once again he hurried back to Mrs. Pewter's and seeing a light in the wash house, opened the door of the kitchen-living room without knocking. Boy Widger, his feet in an old pair of carpet slippers, was fast asleep in the inglenook, looking as though he were at peace with all the world. It was well for the intruder that Mrs. Pewter had gone "up street';' she does not like forcible entry.

By the end of the week twenty-four rabbits had been left and had been stolen; Mr. Blite set his losses at a pound. He had a further loss of eightpence, having given little Teddy Archer twopence a night, for four nights, to report if Boy Widger left his aunt's house in the two hours following his return home. The report established his assistant's innocence though it yielded no clue. Bydowns is a mile and a half from the village of Great Mudford.

"Tod," said Mr. Blite, suddenly, on the Saturday night to Mr. Mole, most eminent of poachers, "you bin Bydowns way this week, I reckon."

"No," said Mr. Mole, "I ain't bin nigh it, 'pon me honour an' word. That Master Nipsell's too double cunnin', a man gotter have two brines to git th' best o' he. I'd leifer go where folk ain't got one, an' there's plenty of 'em about."

"Is that so," commented Mr. Blite, "What make ye think he's all that sharp, Tod? I never took him to be one o' th' clever ones."

"He got fower eyes to start with," said Mr. Mole, referring to Mr. Nipsell's spectacles, "an' he got at least two more back of his head. If I was to goo there reg'lar he'd drop on me, sure as harvest. I jes' take a night now an' agen, arter he bin an' had a long day at market an' th' weather ain't none too good, an' even that's hazardable. But you can't git upsides wi' that Master Nipsell f'r long. Nobody never did, an' his father was as cunnin' as him. Folk should say he larnt him."

Mr. Blite did some hard thinking. He had "subbed" thirty shillings that day and he liked the work. Boy Widger did all hard digging leaving him sunny hours in which to smoke his pipe and enjoy the landscape; occupations at which he may claim to excel, for he has a mind given to contemplation and there is nothing he contemplates with greater pleasure than the activities of his unwise fellow men.

In the following week he set no rabbits aside, a fortnight passed before he tried again on a modest scale; four on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. All disappeared though Boy Widger, to whom Teddy Archer had once again been appointed, did not leave home.

A baffled, beaten, disappointed man, Mr. Blite finished the job without further attempts to improve the position. In some dim fashion he understood that man is one and the Fates are three, and when all was said and done, he had good money to take, even if it were not so good as he had intended.

"We'll settle up now," said Mr. Nipsell, as he entered the barn when the work was at an end and the last market day had passed. Mr. Blite had come to Bydowns by appointment.

"Two hundred and ninety-six rabbits brought up to the house," said the farmer, "and thirty-six I had to fetch." His tone was the ordinary, dull one; he spoke with assurance, but without bitterness.

"Same as fetch?" queried Mr. Blite, helplessly.

"Yes," Mr. Nipsell was saying, without a trace of emotion. "I had to go out nine nights to fetch those you overlooked. I suppose that's the right word; anyway it sounds best. I'm not fond of the extra exercise when I've done a day's work and I don't do it for nothing. A farmer wants overtime, like the rest of the world. Thirty-six rabbits at tenpence, they were very good ones, is thirty shillings, but I must charge half a crown a night for going out after tea and that's £1 2s. 6d. One pound two and six from fifteen shillings leaves you seven and six in my debt. I'm deducting it from the balance due to you."

"I count that must ha' bin Boy Widger," began Mr. Blite, in a tone of righteous indignation; "he ain't honest ——"

"I don't want to hear ye say nawthen agin Boy Widger," said Mr. Nipsell, interrupting the protest. "I'm giving him a regular job; a good steady, hard working, honest lad. I often watched him through my field glasses doing the heavy digging while you sat on the ferret box and smoked."

"How you bin an' done it, Master?" asked Mr. Blite, helplessly.

"There was no magic in it," explained Mr. Nipsell. "It was as easy as eating pie. Round th' tie beam on the wall there's a slate and a pencil. Boy Widger only had to put a figure and one word —gorse, bramble, ditch, as the case might be; I always knew where you finished up; my field glasses told me that. If you hadn't stopped after two tries, Jim, you'd have been out of pocket, though you paid Boy Widger so badly that I gave him an extra couple of shillings a week. If I could get men to work for me as hard as he worked for you, at twice the money, I'd be rich. But there, I suppose I've thinned the rabbits as reasonable as I could have expected. I don't think there's anything more to be said. Here's your money, sign this receipt and you can have it."

"That Master Nipsell," said Boy Widger, complacently to an irate employer, late on the following afternoon when Mr. Blite met him up street and exhausted all the resources of an ample vocabulary, "sent f'r me afore we started.. He towd me he wanted th' rabbits trapped an' there worn't nobody else to do it jus' then, but I gotter keep a eye on you, bein' you cou'n't goo strite if you tried. 'He's in th' skin of a thief,' he sez, 'an he on't never git out on't.'"

"You say that agen," cried Mr. Blite, doubling his fists.

"He said you cou'n't goo strite if you tried," repeated Boy Widger, quite unconcerned, "an' you're in th' skin of a thief. Dedn't yer hear me fust time? An' you don't wanter put y'r fistses up at me. Telly f'r why. I ain't done ye no hu't, but if you put 'em I might take these here to ye. Did, you ouldn't know y'r own face, Jim, an' you ouldn't like it neither, bein' I've larned to box an' you ain't. Look at me bunch of fives." He exhibited them. They looked terribly effective for the settlement of differences.

"I ouldn't bemean meself to touch sech as you," growled Mr. Blite.

"You don't want you should," replied Boy Widger, "except you're lookin' f'r y'r bed o' sickness. Master Nipsell should say he reckon you'll end in jile an' he knows what he's talkin' about."

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Passing Show

Detours to Hats

FIRST of all, I must warn you not to let your menfolk read these pages this week. I'll tell you why.

Dolly Tree, famous M.G.M. film dress designer, says that men have much better taste than women. She even goes so far as to say that if more women listened to the dress advice offered by their men, there would be fewer clothes' blunders.

She is definitely on the side of the stronger sex and explains that men show their superior taste in matters of their own personal wardrobes. They are acutely conscious of the value of neatness. Few of them step out with unpressed trousers or minus a clean handkerchief in their breast pocket.

Women are apt to swing with a fad, regardless of anything else. Men look for quality in the clothes they buy. They acquire the plain thing, appropriate for a good many occasions, rather than clutter their cupboards with clothes suitable for only one occasion.

Ask any man to analyse a fabric for you and you'll be surprised at his knowledge. Nine times out of ten he'll be able to tell you how it will tailor, how it will clean and press and just how long it will wear.

Miss Tree feels that men know much more about feminine dress than any woman gives them credit for knowing. "I'd trust a *man's* opinion over a woman's any day," she says, adding that because a man looks at a woman from head to toe he gains a complete ensemble effect.

Women can't be sufficiently impersonal. Their eyes take detours to the hat, simply as a hat; to the dress; to the shoes; but all individually.

That's why a man is a better critic, according to Dolly Tree. It is also why masculine remarks concerning unbecoming frocks or accessories should not be greeted with, "You don't know anything about women's clothes."

It may hurt some women to admit it, but he does know about women's clothes and about styles and about who should wear them and who should not. When he says something is unbecoming, he means it. He is innately honest in his observations. After all, a man is flattered to be seen with a woman who is nicely groomed. Therefore, any criticism he may make should be taken as constructive.

"I work with men continually," adds Dolly Tree. "Directors, set designers, men in dozens of other fields of the motion picture industry, and any time any one of them makes a suggestion, I consider it very seriously, for nine times out of ten he's right."

Glancing through a copy of an American magazine the other day, I noticed a drawing of two pukka sahibs (presumably typically English) discussing a girl (also presumably typically English,) and the caption ran: "I can see the old girl now, pacing up and down in her flat heels and smelling like saddle soap."

I admit that I was amused by the cartoon but I felt that I'd like to write to the editor telling him that the typical Englishwoman is not really so unattractive and does not really go around as he imagines. And I would like to have sent him a piece of soap to show him that all English soap does not smell like saddle-soap, which reminds me. . . .

Soap may interest you, too.

To look at, it looks like any other piece of soap, but it has a difference. It is a thing of many purposes; in fact, it's a complete beauty treatment in itself.

This new cosmetic soap is skilfully compounded of special oils and is ideal for the bath and for washing off make-up at bedtime (or at any other time for that matter.)

Its immediate action is to cleanse the skin very thoroughly, leaving it soft and white and, at the same time, its ample oils gently feed the muscles and its slight astringent action will tone up flabby tissues and stimulate the bloodstream. It is a natural skin food and is absolutely pure.

If you are interested, write to me, marking your envelope "Soap." I shall be pleased to send you fuller particulars.

It doesn't smell of saddle soap!

So you're going to give a party and you want to know what your guests would like to eat? You suggest something that is simple, good to taste, attractive to look at and will really help your party along. Well, take your choice of these "bits and pieces."

Actually, I made all these for a small party the other evening. I

If you are interested in any of the things mentioned in this page, please write to Virginia Hall, c/o "The Passing Show," 92 Long Acre, W.C.2, for she is very willing to help in such matters

spread them all out on a large tray and left people to help themselves. And did they? They wolfed the lot and pretty quickly, too.

These are the things I bought. Sixpenny box of salty biscuits; some caviar toasts (which are very light, so you get a lot for 6d.) some brown bread, which I cut very thin; 1 small tin of *paté de foie gras* (price 1s. 3d.,) 1 tin fillets of anchovy, 1 jar prawns, 1 tin mushrooms, 1 tin asparagus tips, 1 tin pimento (mainly for decoration,) some cream cheese, 2 tomatoes, 4 eggs, butter, aspic and parsley.

I removed the crusts and buttered the brown bread and rolled two stalks of asparagus in each piece. Next I buttered, thinly, the salty biscuits and on them I put the following mixtures :—

Two of the eggs had been hard-boiled and cut into thin slices. I had also skinned the tomatoes and cut them into slices, so I put first a piece of tomato and then a slice of egg on a biscuit, crowned by a small piece of parsley.

The other two eggs I boiled and mashed up with a knob of butter. I put a spoonful of this mixture on a biscuit, circled by an anchovy fillet and, in the centre, decorated it by a piece of pimento and just a scattering of chopped parsley.

On some more biscuits I put some cream cheese surrounded by a strip of pimento with one of the button mushrooms stuck in the centre. And I did the same with the rest of the biscuits, using prawns in place of the cheese.

The caviar toasts I filled with the *paté de foie gras* which I decorated with mushrooms cut in half.

When I had finished all this, I brushed them all over with aspic, which gave them a most professional appearance.

You may think that all this sounds very finicky. But it's not really. In fact, it's great fun and gives grand scope to your decorative powers!

During a rather gossipy hen-party the other afternoon somebody said, "Have you seen young Wilson's wife? She must be *years* older than he is."

Well, I was at school with young Wilson's wife. Also, I knew young Wilson; so I was sure of my facts when I replied: "You're wrong; she's about eighteen months younger!"

My friends would hardly believe it, for they pointed out that Dorothy looked so much older. She had so many wrinkles.

She *does* look older and it is simply due to the fact that her skin, especially round the eyes, is badly wrinkled. I've often wondered why she doesn't do something about it. For nowadays wrinkles can be remedied! Maybe she doesn't know just how. But the next time we meet I shall try, tactfully, to tell her. In the meantime I'm sure you will be interested to know that it can be done by using a marvellously effective wrinkle-erasing cream.

For those who already have a few wrinkles, maybe the first signs of advancing years, or perhaps the aftermath of some illness, let me suggest that you use some cream, which if you apply it evenly with the finger-tips, putting a little extra on the parts actually wrinkled, will work wonders.

A difference will even be noticed after the first two or three applications and you will soon find that your face will look years younger. This cream is quite harmless to the most delicate skin, its ingredients being hygienic and antiseptic.

If you want to know more about this preparation, I shall be pleased to tell you, if you write to me, marking your envelope "Wrinkles."

If you ever tire of the usual coverings for chairs, here's some news that will inspire you. I have an armchair in my bedroom (originally covered in plain material) which, for the last year, has been hidden under flowered material. And among the flowers were birds which have been peering at me with jaundiced eyes until I could stand it no longer. So I've had the chair recovered in checked gingham. Yes, just ordinary "summer-frock" gingham. And I'm awfully pleased with the effect. So if you've some broody birds, you want to try gingham. It's a complete change.

A few weeks ago Virginia Hall mentioned two free easy-to-make patterns, and here is our artist's impression of them and the fabric with which it was suggested they should be made. Why not try to make them?

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THEY SAILED FOR SENEGAL

BY WILSON MACARTHUR

ILLUSTRATED BY W. J. SMITHSON BROADHEAD

Governor Schmaltz sat in state and curtly ordered Lieut. Reynaud to use his best speed to come up with de Chaumareys

DISASTER has overtaken the *Medusa*, a frigate carrying the newly-appointed governor, Col. Julian Schmaltz, his family, and a complement of soldiers and civilians, to Senegal, a colony returned to the French by the British, after the final defeat of Napoleon.

Through the incompetency of her commander, the Vicomte de Chaumareys, a nobleman who has come into his own with the restoration of the French monarchy, the frigate has been wrecked on the Arguin bank, off the coast of Africa and, as attempts to refloat her have failed, it is decided that the vessel shall be abandoned

The ship's boats, carrying passengers and crew, are to tow a raft, made to accommodate the soldiers, to the shore, so that the governor and his followers may march to the port of St. Louis, but these plans misfire when de Chaumareys, terrified that the *Medusa* will fall to pieces in a storm, orders the frigate to be abandoned in the midst of a confusion caused by soldiers and sailors getting drunk and looting the ship's stores.

Eventually men are crowded on to the raft and the boats are occupied by the governor and his people, while a few terror-stricken people remain on the wreck, refusing to be moved. The convoy moves off, but the boats are so overloaded that they are forced to cut the raft adrift, so that, half-submerged and without supplies, it floats out to sea, while the boats head for the shore.

NOW READ ON

Jean-Daniel Coudin, the midshipman who had been placed in charge of the raft, had managed to install himself in the centre, out of reach of the seas. His injured leg troubled him terribly. The sea-water had reopened the wound and he was already suffering agonies. He had made some attempt at taking charge, but he was in no condition to enforce his orders, and while the raft was still under tow another more powerful personality had made its presence felt.

Jean-Baptiste Savigny, the supernumerary naval surgeon, who had attended to his wound, had also found himself upon the raft, along with Corréard, the geographic engineer, and some of the army officers.

A man of considerable force of character and strength of mind, he was energetic and capable, and if his profession, at a time when the infliction of terrific pain was thought to be inseparable from surgery of any kind, had made him callous and brutal, he, nevertheless, was the only man on board capable of handling the situation that presently arose and taking active measures to make the best that could be made of it.

When Savigny looked around to obtain a general idea of the resources of the raft, he found six hogsheads of wine, two small breakers with drinking water and a certain small quantity of meal, in addition to the sodden biscuit. So much for provisions; but he did not intend to drift immediately, or until the boats returned to the rescue. He intended to get the raft under way.

There were sails and spars. But there was no cordage with them and, when he searched for them, no charts, no instruments—nothing that could assist them to navigate.

Savigny faced the position without quibbling.

They had now no means of discovering in what direction they were travelling, or where they were at any given time. They were utterly at the mercy of the wind and sea and there was no telling how long it would be before help arrived. Not only that, they also appeared to be in the grip of an offshore current setting them swiftly out into the Atlantic and unless it slackened, or they were caught by some other onshore current, their chances of being picked up would speedily become remote.

The only immediate solution was to make sail, by which they might at least hold their own against the current.

The people, a hundred and forty-seven of them, all told—four officers, a hundred and twenty soldiers, fifteen sailors and eight civilians, including one woman—seemed calm. They joked, clinging together and trying to keep out of reach of the sea which lapped up over the raft.

Savigny, observing that the wind was on-shore, contrary to the current, which by now had lost a good deal of its strength or else was beginning to change direction, decided to get to work. He could not bear the idleness of waiting for the rescue that, in a few hours, would come. Any effort, however futile, would keep him and the men occupied, and might even shorten their ordeal by a little space.

"Come, Gauthier," he ordered. "Cut that mast in two and we'll rig it amidships. We can easily fit up some sort of sail."

The work was put in hand. Cordage was found by casting off some of the lashings of the raft, and soon the mast was ready and, not without difficulty, stepped and stayed, somewhat towards the afterpart. A royal yard from the frigate was fixed to it and a sail set. The parted tow-rope came in useful at this point, to supplement the inadequate cordage.

The sail drew well; but it could only be used with a following wind and very soon they discovered that the raft was not designed for sailing, even before the wind. The great beams fixed laterally underneath had an immediate effect; the raft came round broadside to wind and sea, presenting, as all drifting objects do,

its greatest surface of resistance. A ship adrift turns broadside to the weather, just as a bullet, were it not set spinning by the rifling of the barrel from which it is fired, would turn broadside to its line of trajectory and travel only a very short distance.

Savigny watched the result of his efforts with some dismay and a good deal of annoyance.

"It's no good," the surgeon growled to Corréard, who alone understood what he had been trying to do and the difficulties that rendered it impossible. "We'll never make the coast like this."

The geographer nodded.

"All the same, we shan't be here long," he replied, consolingly. "They'll soon be back. . . ."

Darkness came.

With it came the sea and a wind, strengthening steadily, from the west. Within a few hours it was a gale; the seas were immense, surging down upon the raft, lifting it bodily, hurling it, staggering and groaning, into immense black troughs of hissing water, pitching it, like a tiny cork, to wave-crests fifty, eighty, a hundred feet apart.

People clung to her, clung to the ropes, the props, clung to anything that would hold their weight. Seas sluiced over her and as she rose dizzily upon the wave-crests it seemed inevitable that she must capsize. She would cant up to such an angle that it was almost impossible to retain one's hold, then she would go charging down, surging and yawing wildly, into a trough that seemed bottomless, so that it appeared that she would continue for ever hurtling downwards, or else strike bottom.

Then again she would feel the lift; she would be sent crashing up, until a crest curled over her, broke, smashed down upon her and then she had shaken herself free of it, was riding, for a brief dizzying instant, upon the top, with the night sky above, the gale tearing at her, the seas roaring and plunging and hissing, spindrift driving in stinging clouds like hail, stars wheeling behind wind-racked clouds that scudded away to the east, away to the land they longed for so passionately; those people who, drenched, battered, half drowned, half insensible, clung so pitiably to the frail security of the raft.

Men, hurled across the deck, fetching up against the crude bulwarks, screamed in agony. Each time the raft mounted a crest and paused before falling away, canting up steeply, shouts of terror rose from the huddled crowd: "We are capsizing! We're going over!"

But she did not capsize; and now the night, as if to demonstrate the full fury of which it was capable, added a fresh terror. The gale, roaring and screaming in from the Atlantic, brought with it a thunderstorm and, in the barely intermittent flashes that lit up the sky and sea, the people on the raft, when she rose to a crest, had a glimpse, abrupt and terrifying and as abruptly cut off, of the sea which seethed and boiled like a cauldron all around them—the sea tormented by the gale, whipped to savage fury, churned up over the shallows of the great Arguin Bank until it seemed impossible that anything devised by man could live, could continue to float upon the maelstrom, for even a few seconds.

Back then into the blackness of the great pits between the waves, a blackness that howled and thundered and roared, deafening them; and out of which the sea reached long fingers to snatch at them, and sent a constant barrage of solid water to stun them, to hammer them into surrender.

The raft worked. The spars and beams of which it was constructed had been well lashed together; they had been designed to withstand any strain, however great, but, like the strakes of a Viking galley, they were lashed, not rivetted, and they worked, churning against each other, opening and closing up.

Towards the afterpart, the planks that made the central platform were wider apart and from this point came, suddenly, a terrible scream of agony.

A man, crouching there with the water up over his thighs, had suddenly slipped. An interstice had opened under his foot, his foot had gone through, the gap had closed. . . .

Another piercing scream — another victim. Again and again those screams rang out, torn from anguished throats as unfortunate wretches felt themselves trapped, feet or legs pinned between the working spars.

Once a man, clinging with a companion to a rope, turned in time to see a huge wave flinging itself upon the raft; he flattened out, bracing himself; and the deluge descended. For an eternity it poured over him, battering the breath out of his body, smashing him down, dragging at him until his arms were all but torn from their sockets; and when it had passed when he could move again, weakly, groaning with the agony of that terrific pounding, his companion was gone.

M. de Chaumareys was much too occupied in ensuring the comfort of his delightful Francine to pay attention to his companions. He had, once more, got rid of his obligations and responsibilities. It was Maudet who had cast off the tow; it was the Governor's barge that had finally abandoned the raft. No blame could attach to him.

His boat was well manned, and very lightly laden. Before his ignominious embarkation, through the forward rigging-port, he had taken care to ensure that an adequate supply of food and wine was put on board, and that Francine had everything she required for her comfort.

The barge was similarly favoured. Governor Schmaltz, although keeping out of sight while the raft was being loaded, had seen to it that provisions were put into his boat and that his wife and daughters had ample room on board to maintain the dignity and importance of their station. Enthroned in his armchair, he did not glance once astern, at the abandoned raft and its throng of helpless passengers. He sat in state, and curtly instructed Lieut. Reynaud to use his best speed in order to come up with de Chaumareys.

Those two had already formed a tacit alliance. They represented authority, the ancient regime which, by the grace of God, had returned to power; certain of their officers, too, belonged to the same class; the rest were survivals from the Corsican bandit's so-called Empire, and as such were inevitably under suspicion, certainly not to be considered seriously.

So both men had a natural inclination to travel in company and the two boats were presently close together and drawing steadily away from the rest. The yawl, under the command of the energetic de Chasteluz, who knew very well where safety lay, had raced away ahead at first; but de Chasteluz, for all his energy and enthusiasm, was no sailor, and the yawl gradually lost her lead and was passed even by Lapeyrere and Maudet.

So they continued for some time towards the land. De Chaumareys and Schmaltz led the flotilla, the others struggling along in their wake; far astern, the overladen sloop, labouring infinitely slowly and in perpetual danger of being swamped, only just kept in sight.

Towards nightfall, the land hove in sight. They continued for a short time on their eastward course and then a conference was held.

"You observe, monsieur," de Chaumareys called to the Governor, "the shore has the appearance of being extremely inhospitable. In fact, it would be most hazardous to attempt a landing."

Colonel Schmaltz concurred. He had already noted, with distaste, the nature of the land they had approached so hopefully; and he had no intention of relinquishing his comfortable armchair to march on his own two legs an unguessable number of miles, when there was every chance of being carried in perfect safety to St. Louis by sea.

"It appears to me that it would be very unwise to attempt to beach the boats at this point," he declared.

De Chaumareys accepted this confirmation of his own opinion with unbounded delight. Again his responsibility was being borne for him, the decision taken out of his hands.

They stared at the land—at the long low line of rocks, the heavy surf that intervened, the sand dunes that stretched away as far as the eye could see. Veritably an inhospitable coast! It seemed folly to disembark there, where there were no signs of habitation, no trace of cultivation, no likelihood of any succour. They thought of the many miles between them and their destination, they remembered the torrid sun, the burning heat of the desert, and they reached—although they had, secretly, long ago reached—their decision.

"We must continue along the coast. No doubt we shall come upon a more suitable place for landing—although it would seem wise to proceed by sea the whole way to St. Louis. Yes, undoubtedly we should make for St. Louis, and not attempt to land."

All thought of the proposed caravan had been abandoned. Facilely, they ignored the plain facts of the case—the leaky, unseaworthy condition of the other boats, the fact that, in the hubbub of embarkation, the provisions and drinking supplies had been overlooked. They had entirely dismissed the raft from their minds. It no longer concerned them.

They signalled their intention to the other boats.

By the time they doubled Cape Mérick the barge and the captain's boat found themselves alone, out of sight of the rest. Once more de Chaumareys had abandoned his comrades, had deserted his squadron and deliberately, callously, gone on ahead in order to lighten the weight of his responsibility—and to shorten the ordeal confronting him.

Espiaux, in charge of the over-burdened sloop, hesitated some time before finally abandoning the raft.

There were not a few on board who shared his own scruples, yet what could they do? The sloop was making water, she was very difficult to handle, slow in stays and sluggish in answering the tiller. One had to consider, first of all, the people who were crammed into her—eighty-eight of them, nearly double the number she had been intended to carry.

It was not until he had seen Savigny stepping the mast and setting the sail that he felt sufficient confidence to continue at his best speed on the heels of the other boats. Then, with a dead following wind, he let the sloop have her head, and she began to gather way, to lumber along steadily.

By the time the raft was out of sight the water was up over the floorboards, and threatening to swamp the sloop altogether. She had, at her best with such a load, only a few inches of freeboard; the water that poured in through her leaking and hastily caulked strakes would very soon reduce even that, until she was gunwales-under.

"Look out, there!" Espiaux cried. "We're sinking! Get to work, men!"

They responded willingly, realising their danger. Shakos, helmets, caps, hats, bowls, anything that would hold water, were snatched up, and soon everyone who had space to move, elbow-room to swing his arm, was bailing for all he was worth.

Fortunately, the sea continued calm, and under her two badly trimmed sails and five oars she made headway eastwards. Towards four o'clock, one of the sailors, standing up in the bows, let out a cry.

"Land-ho!"

Immediately the atmosphere on board changed. All eyes strained towards the low dark line on the horizon, and spirits rose at a bound. Saved—saved at last! It had been an easy passage; it would soon be over. There lay the land, ahead. The sloop continued to make good time with the following wind and the calm sea, very shortly now one would be on dry land. One's adventures would be over. A cheer went up.

Then once more the men bent to the task of bailing. But not desperately now—in the best of spirits, accepting this as all part of the fun, something that would soon be over. One did not mind a little work!

In the midst of the relief that greeted this approach to the land, another cry suddenly rang out from the lookout in the bows:

"Luff! Luff her up, sir! There's no depth!"

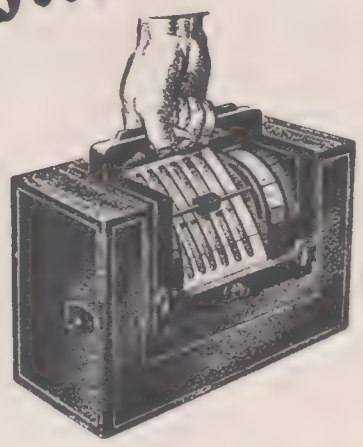
Espiaux threw the tiller hard over. He had seen sandbanks ahead, had done his best to steer the unwieldy craft clear of them, and now he acted instantly, without a second's hesitation. But even so he was too late. The heavy sloop came round slowly, with maddening deliberation, quickly losing steerage way so that it was impossible to get her into the wind sharply enough. With a faint tremor, and a soft grinding of sand under her keel, she ran aground.

She was on, perhaps, the most treacherous spot on the African coast. The waves break more than a mile out from the shore, forming a formidable line of surf. With the wind in its present quarter, the great Atlantic rollers curled over upon

(*please turn over*)

Seashore or

Sitting room



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themselves in as much as fifty feet of water, making any near approach to land hazardous in the extreme, while shoals, reefs, sandbanks and flats were strewn about the sea, sometimes several miles off shore, ready to entrap the unwary.

Espiaux did what he could. By almost superhuman efforts he managed to refloat the heavy sloop, to get her into deep water but it was nine o'clock before they were clear and rounded Cape Mérick.

Very shortly after, the wind, until then steady and no more than a pleasant sailing breeze, strengthened until it rose to gale force and the seas grew longer, steeper, more formidable. The sloop, labouring along parallel with the shore, took those seas almost broadside and pitched and rolled heavily. Water poured over the lee gunwale as she heeled under the weight of the wind in her sails, over the weather gunwale as she righted, and rolled sluggishly to starboard. The men baled for their lives now, with desperation as the darkness came down.

The storm grew fiercer, the sloop went charging down immense hillsides of water into utter blackness, fought her way once more to the gleaming, luminous crests that hissed and roared under the frenzied lash of the gale. Pierre Gorret, the quartermaster, who had relieved Espiaux, had constantly to alter course, but in spite of everything, in spite of her almost non-existent freeboard, in spite of her badly trimmed canvas and her slow answering to her helm, she was invaded by solid green water no more than two or three times during the night. It was as well, for each invasion brought with it not less than thirty buckets of water, and with less skilled and experienced men at her tiller she would indubitably have been swamped.

Dawn again—a grey tempestuous dawn upon a scene of utter desolation.

Savigny bestirred himself. Certainly the sea had gone down a little, the sky was clearing, the gale blowing itself out. It was possible now to stand upright upon the raft, to take stock.

Coudin suffered agonies from his injury. He was semi-delirious, the salt water having aggravated his leg wound beyond bearing. Corréard was light-headed, inclined to ramble, seeming hardly able to grasp the situation. Savigny alone was cool, master of himself, capable of appreciating their condition and the danger that still threatened them.

Twenty men had gone from the raft, and even as he looked, Savigny was in time to see a man crawl to the edge of the raft and fling himself over into the water. In time to see him, not in time to interfere . . . supposing he had desired to interfere. . . .

Even so, the raft was still crammed far beyond its proper capacity. Savigny realised, with a cold dispassionate clarity, that something would have to be done, and done soon. The raft could not continue to support so large a number. It would have to be reduced. One could, at all events, sacrifice the feeblest, those who had no real chance in any case of surviving the exposure, the ordeal they were called upon to face.

Suddenly three figures, sodden, battered and with burning eyes in their drawn, haggard faces, rose upon the raft—two cabin-boys, pathetic youngsters whose faces shone with the light of a vision, and one of the bakers, an oldish man upon whom, also, lay this strange sense of unearthly glory.

They had been talking together, very quietly, very seriously, for a long time. Now the baker spoke, addressing the mob on the raft, his voice quiet, compassionate, and comforting.

"Have no fear," he said, smiling gently upon them. "We are going to look for help and in a little while you will see us returning."

Then, accompanied by the cabin-boys, he stepped off the raft.

A sudden commotion broke out from the mass of soldiers forward. Several men, with drawn sabres in their hands—pilfered during the night from the officers—came rushing aft, with a fixed and desperate purpose in their faces. They paid no attention to the people who confronted them, who fell back before the threat of the cold steel. They began to lay hold upon the provisions, helping themselves liberally.

Savigny took the initiative.

Followed by the young army officers, he advanced upon them and there was a short, sharp scuffle. The terrible night had taken its toll; the soldiers, desperate as they were, half demented, all discipline thrown to the tempest, had been weakened by their ordeal, they had not the strength left to stand up to the surgeon, whose own strength was buttressed by the strength of his will, his determination to keep control, to maintain the order that was essential if all were not to perish.

The men were disarmed, as much as possible of the provisions recovered. Savigny returned to his post, alert for further signs of trouble—and searching, unremittingly, for any hope of succour.

Several men came forward, quietly, with docile humility—sailors, these. One of them, acting as spokesman, touched his forelock.

"Monsieur, if you would be so good as to issue our hammocks, now that we are off duty . . . we ought to turn in for a spell. It is our watch below, but we have no hammocks. . . ."

He was perfectly serious. Savigny, at first savagely incensed by what seemed a cruel jest, realised that, immediately after. The man spoke simply, like a child. He was deeply perplexed. One relied upon one's officers. He could not understand why provision had not been made . . . he believed himself back on board the frigate.

When the surgeon shook his head briefly, with a muttered word, he turned away sadly, his companions turned away with him, cowed, disconsolate, submissive—and deeply bewildered. They could not understand. . . .

Poor devils! Savigny had a moment when he could feel sorry for them. Then the stark reality of the situation appalled him afresh. Madness—this was madness, taking a grip of the crew, slowly undermining their sanity, slowly turning the raft into a floating asylum of lunatics . . . and they had been adrift for less than a day!

Corréard, fallen into a state of semi-coma, rocked a little as he sat, to the motion of the carriage that was bearing him away for a pleasant excursion into the country. Above him was spread the clear blue sky, around him the green pleasant woods of his beloved Italian landscape. Everything was happiness, peace. But suddenly he was wide awake again, the sunbathed landscape vanished, he was back upon the raft and one of the young army subalterns was whispering urgently in his ear.

"I have just remembered, monsieur, that we have been abandoned by the boats. Strange that it didn't occur to me before to do anything about it. Now I have made up my mind. I shall write a letter to the governor at once and whenever he hears of our predicament he will take steps. In a few hours we shall be rescued."

Corréard listened to him with a chill at his heart, a swift horror; yet he heard himself reply—and the reply took him aback more, probably, than it did the man to whom it was addressed:

"Have you got a carrier-pigeon tucked away somewhere, then, to take your orders so quickly, monsieur?"

The youngster looked at him with a pitying glance, and turned away, smiling secretively to himself. Of course this poor fellow Corréard was not quite right in the head, he did not understand what an officer could do, he did not realise that naturally the governor would send help the moment he had word of the position of the raft!

Savigny listened and watched, growing more bitter, more convinced than ever that he would have to take a hand, to adopt a firm line and rid the raft of some, at least, of its cargo of imbeciles.

One could not perish like this, merely because a few men were weak-minded and incapable of facing a little danger and discomfort!

Towards eight o'clock in the morning, the wind began to drop. It seemed almost as if the sloop might continue her incredible voyage; but, as she approached the land again, the wind freshened once more.

"What do you think, quartermaster?" Espiaux demanded, eyeing the weather sky anxiously. Gorret replied without hesitation. Throughout the night he had calmly expected every moment to be his last, he had not for a single second believed that the sloop would live until daylight and he had no doubt whatever about what would happen if the experience were repeated.

"Impossible, sir. We can't continue like this."

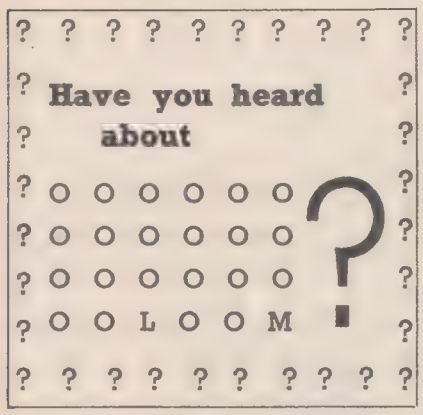
Espiaux agreed. He knew the danger equally as well as Gorret, he had no intention of needlessly risking the lives entrusted to him.

"This seems a favourable spot," he commented, turning to survey the shore. "It might be advisable to take advantage of it, and anchor for a spell. We may ride out the storm—and I don't at all like the look of that sky."

Gorret altered course, and Espiaux, determined not to risk running aground far out to sea, ordered him to pick his way in as close to the land as possible. Luck favoured them; no reefs, no sandbanks here. They were able to anchor just outside the line of surf then, with the sails stowed, they dropped astern, paying out the cable, until they were riding in little more than three feet of water.

If the worst happened now, at least they could reach land. They stared with curiosity, eagerness and growing dismay at this land that was now within their

OLD BILL & BERT — by BRUCE BAIRNSFATHER



reach—a vista of endless sand-dunes, barren, devoid of shade, exhibiting no trace of life. The sailors, for their part, preferred the sea. That was their element. They understood the sea, they were used to its tricks. They had no mind to risk their lives on shore.

Lieutenant d'Anglas, who had assumed command of the troops on board, consulted with Petit, the adjutant.

"What do you think? Shall we risk it? Personally, I can't pretend any enthusiasm for a repetition of last night. . . ."

The soldiers did not hesitate for long. The land—they wanted the land. A man could at least do something on land! He could make an effort to save himself, he was not at the mercy of the sea, of a leaky contraption of wood. He had his two feet, he could march. He had his arms, he could defend himself. The land, comrades—that's what we want—the land!

Espiaux did not trouble to hide his relief. He made no effort to dissuade them, because he knew perfectly well that the sloop, with eighty-eight men packed into her, would never make St. Louis, whereas the soldiers were perfectly correct; ashore they could look after themselves, they were not at the mercy of the elements any longer; and they could march.

D'Anglas gave the order. The men clambered or vaulted over the gunwales into the shallow water, their arms and equipment above their heads, and waded ashore.

The soldiers fell in on the sand, and the sloop, setting sail once more, began to pull out from the shore. With only twenty-six men left on board, she had become a different creature. She rode well out of the water, she no longer leaked to any appreciable extent, since the upper strakes most in need of recaulking were no longer submerged; and she answered her tiller smartly and headed up well into the wind.

Also the sailors had room, at last, to attend to the urgent matter of her ill-trimmed sails.

The two parties—soldiers ashore, sailors afloat—saluted each other, and for a long time continued to wave a cheerful and mutually encouraging *au revoir*, until at last the sloop was lost to sight, and young d'Anglas faced the serious business of conducting sixty men, far from docile and with little inclination left towards discipline, an unknown number of miles over an entirely unknown territory, without compasses, without guides, but with every prospect of encountering hostile natives and with very little to eat or drink.

Espiaux was delighted. He had no doubt now that, come what might, he could make St. Louis and thus save, at least, the sloop out of the wreck. He had not forgotten the part played in the affair by the other boats, but if he bore any malice it only manifested itself in a desire to enhance his own reputation at their expense by showing that, without their assistance, he had been able to save the whole of his people.

Within an hour of getting under way again, however, he was surprised to discover a number of sails away astern, and he held his wind a little to allow them to come up until he could distinguish them. He recognised, at length, the longboat, the smallboat, and the yawl. They had made the coast somewhat to the north of him, and had been delayed by the night's storm.

Espiaux immediately brought the sloop up into the wind and waited for them.

"Yesterday," he said drily, "they refused to take off any of our extra passengers. To-day we'll turn the tables on them. Now that we've got plenty of room, we'll offer to take over some of theirs!"

One could still, in the midst of all this tragic muddle, enjoy a little joke! In any case, Espiaux had shown himself to be of very different calibre from most of his shipmates. He could understand their behaviour, he could forgive it, however much he still privately condemned it. He was capable of a really great gesture and he had not lost his sense of humour.

As the other boats came up, they hauled their wind, they began to slacken speed, and finally they halted altogether, eyeing the waiting sloop with misgivings. They had suddenly remembered that little incident of the day before, when they had all ignored his appeals for help, and now they feared the consequences. In some miraculous manner Espiaux had got rid of that terrific crowd, his boat was once more manageable, she had recovered her normal speed—and her crew were not likely to forget how they had been treated, left to sink or swim as they could.

Lapeyrére, Maudet, de Chasteluz hung back, watchful, expecting every moment to see the firearms levelled, to see a line of smoke-puffs along the sloop's gunwale, to hear the clatter of the firing and find themselves the targets of a fusillade they could do nothing to return. They were prepared, at the very least, to find themselves held up at the point of the musket and compelled to hand over their fast dwindling supplies of food.

Such an idea had not crossed the lieutenant's mind. He was indeed short of drinking water, but had no lack of provisions and, in any case; would not have dreamed of taking them by force from the other boats. It took him some little while to realise the cause of this strange behaviour, but when he did a shout of laughter rose from the sloop, and the sailors, enjoying the joke, kept it up by a display of mock fury that caused the utmost consternation and alarm.

It was fully an hour before the three shamefaced commanders plucked up courage and advanced once more towards the sloop, ready at any instant to surrender incontinently to whatever demands Espiaux might make.

The sea itself took a hand. It began to get up again, and it soon became clear that another storm, or renewal of last night's, was imminent. The yawl, unskilfully managed by her engineer in command, found herself unable to keep up into the wind, and eventually approached the sloop in a series of short hesitant tacks.

"Monsieur!" de Chasteluz cried, pleadingly. "We cannot weather another gale. Already we are in danger of foundering. I beg of you, in the name of humanity—take us on board the sloop!"

Espiaux smiled, with a reassuring wave of the hand.

"That is why I hove-to," he replied, quietly. "In order to offer to take over your surplus passengers."

The point told. De Chasteluz coloured, muttering some excuse; and presently the yawl was alongside, and her people transshipped. It was not easy, however, with such a sea running and it took time. But the sloop's crew was prepared to forgive and forget, and lent a willing hand.

NEXT WEEK:
Mutiny on the Raft

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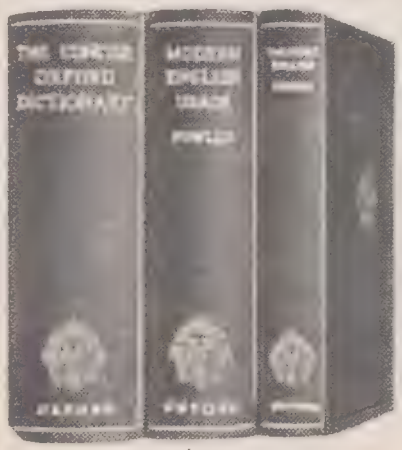

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WHEN FINISH MEANS BEGINNING

After all these years in the hat trade, Amos Benn feels capable of dealing with life at its worst, but the way of a man and two maids leaves him gasping for mercy

BY GILBERT HORSLER

ILLUSTRATED BY SINCLAIR CALOW.

THE remarks of Hilda Mennings were pure, unadulterated, criminal libel; scandalous of intent and meaning. Mabel Barton, after first stating that she would not soil her lips with her private opinion of the mental and moral character of Hilda, immediately falsified her own words with a gusto and comprehensiveness that left little of the honours of war to the previous speaker. After ten minutes of high spirited cross talk, any listener who was under the slightest illusions as to the complete unworthiness of either young lady would have been irrefutably suffering from chronic deafness.

Having exhausted a remarkably comprehensive, mutual vocabulary, the contestants changed from verbal to direct attack, to the serious detriment of carefully applied complexions and 'perms' that had been guaranteed as 'set' for at least six months. Where the latter were concerned, the damage was to the ratio of roughly a month a minute while the battle royal lasted.

Lucelle, finding tactful remonstrances about as effective as diplomatic "notes" . . . wisely sought advice and help from her employer. Amos Benn regarded his pretty designer glumly:

"Girls are ten times worse than men once they do start rowing," he observed. "I haven't been handling them for a lifetime without knowing that. . . . What's the trouble about? A boy, as usual, I suppose?"

"Yes. Hilda Mennings caught Mabel Barton coming out of a cinema, arm in arm with her own special boy friend. This morning's outburst is only a continuation of the battle . . . the second edition so to speak. . . . By the look of things there will be many more."

"That's bad," grunted Amos. "The next thing that will be happening is that the other girls will be taking sides and then the whole workroom will be in uproar. The worst of it is that they are both good workers and I don't want to do anything drastic. Who is the fellow anyway. Must be a bit of a Romeo to get two such attractive girls—nuts on him?"

"Bert Latimer is the name. Considering how it has been dinned into my ears, I am not likely to forget it. As to his attractions . . . I am afraid I do not know the gentleman, personally. In the circumstances perhaps it's as well," Despite her worries, Lucelle could not resist a smile at her own sally.

(*please turn to page* 40)

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"No, you might only add fuel to the flames," grinned Benn. He furrowed his brow in thought. "I think I know the beggar. His father used to work for us. I thought the name sounded familiar. The son . . . this Bert . . . is polishing for Andrew Bacon, of all people; if I recall him rightly, he's a very ordinary young cuss. You women are funny creatures . . . with all the town to choose from, these two pretty girls must needs both fall for the same boy and he a poor specimen at that."

"Perhaps they see something in him that nobody else can . . . that's the way of my sex," Lucelle answered.

"They'd need a telescope to see anything wonderful in young Latimer," growled Amos. "However, it's not my business, unless it interferes with the smooth running of the firm. It will have to sort itself out; these things usually do. If it gets too bad, one or both of them will have to go. . . . I hope it does not reach that stage, we can't afford to lose either just now."

Small as the matter might have appeared to an outsider, Amos was perfectly justified in his fears. Nothing can upset a workroom full of girls quicker than a quarrel over a love affair. A woman mad with jealousy will stop at little short of murder, even if she does stop at that, and a camp split into two sympathising sections over such, is soon likely to resemble a hornet's nest stirred by a walking cane. Which was why . . . happening to stroll past the warehouse of his friendly rival—Andrew Bacon—and seeing that optimistic gentleman taking the air, with one eye cocked for possible buyers—Amos stopped on an impulse.

With his inevitable reaction to the troubles of others, Bacon was at once concern. Automatically he pushed his hat back on his head far beyond the margin of apparent safety.

"I'm awfully sorry Amos," he said, contritely, as if the fact that the cause of the bother was in his employ, made the fault his own.

"You can't help it," said Amos. "You didn't bring young Bert into the world; it was old man Latimer that made that mistake. Meanwhile the sooner the beggar makes up his mind which of the two it is he really wants, the quicker we shall have peace, although I suppose there will be one more almighty row when he does decide."

"Perhaps you would like to have a word with him?" suggested Bacon. "He's up in the polishing room now, I can soon send for him?"

The other manufacturer looked doubtful: "It's always been a rule of mine never to interfere with affairs of this kind," he objected. "Butting in between the sexes is a thankless task; the 'butter-in' usually gets the knobbly end of the stick, whatever happens to the principals themselves."

"You could tackle him tactfully," suggested Andrew, who, himself possessing rather less tact than an elephant, would have cheerfully butted into a South American revolution if given half a chance: "A few words of wisdom from age and experience might be very helpful at the moment," he added.

"Never knew that sort of advice do much good yet," grumbled the other. "However, I might at least get a lead on the fellow's intentions and then I shall know what to expect."

Bert Latimer was a medium built young fellow with a mop of unruly flaxen hair and a surly eye. He wore the felt-dust flecked apron of his calling, while in direct defiance of a large notice proclaiming the strict prohibition of smoking, a cheap cigarette hung from one corner of his mouth. On seeing the visiting manufacturer he removed the cigarette; a compliment he would never have thought of paying his own easy going employer.

Against all probabilities, it was Amos who at first appeared the embarrassed one, for he held very rigid ideas on the sanctity of every individual's private concerns. For a moment or two he hummed and hawed, seeking a diplomatic opening:

"Mr. Bacon has kindly allowed me to have a word with you, Latimer," he said, at last. "It's about a little bother between two of my girls of which I understand you are the cause. Let me say at once, that, except as it effects the smooth running of my factory, your love affairs are nothing at all to do with me and that you have a perfect right to tell me to mind my own business. On the other hand, if I can help in any way to straighten things out, I shall be very pleased to do so. Both for your sake and my own."

"You mean Hilda and Mabel, sir?" queried Bert, who was evidently perfectly aware of the rivalry for possession of his charms.

"Yes, those two young fools have been raising Cain over you all the morning, and the trouble shows no signs of subsiding."

"I'm sorry, sir," smirked Latimer, "but neither of them give me a moment's peace, wherever I go." He seemed rather pleased than otherwise at the interest his amours were creating.

"Well, you know, you can't marry both of them; this isn't Turkey. Can't you make up your mind which it is that you do want?" questioned the manufacturer.

Bert scratched his head with a nicotined forefinger: "Funny thing, sir, but that's just what I can't do. You see when I'm with Hilda I like her best and then when I'm with Mabel, Hilda seems to fade from my mind . . . and then of course there is Bertha."

"Bertha? Who the dooce is Bertha?" gasped Amos, aghast at this fresh complication.

"She's a young lady from the north whose family have recently come to live here. I met her at a dance about a week ago. She's got red hair," he added, as if that explained everything.

"I've never heard such disgraceful goings on in my life," ejaculated Bacon, in shocked tones. "Why, you are an absolute Othello."

"You mean Don Juan," corrected Amos. "It's the girls who will be doing the Othello stuff if this young fellow is not careful. You are playing with fire, my lad." He turned a disapproving eye on the heart breaker.

"At this of all times, with that new finish of yours waiting to go on the market," Andrew added expostulation to protest.

At the magic words "New Finish" Benn cocked an interested ear. New finish, to a hat manufacturer, means much the same as a gold strike to a prospector. Usually they are discovered by accident during the ordinary process of manufacture, and the lucky man on whose premises the discovery is made, inevitably scoops the cream of the early market, for, in a trade of experts, nothing remains secret for long.

"Yes, I was going to speak to you about that," continued Bacon, turning to his friend. "Latimer has struck a finish that knocks anything I have previously seen sideways. It 'shades' a self coloured hat as if it had been dyed three different colours at the same time. Not that any dye could get the effect. It is bound to be a huge success. Unfortunately, as you know, I only do the cheaper end of the trade, and it seems a pity to lose the larger profits which would result from your own better priced stuff. In any case it is a pity to introduce this finish on a cheap hat at the start. It will come to that soon enough. I wondered if we could get together in any way."

Amos looked dubious; greatly as he admired his friend's lovable character, past experience had taught him the dangers of anything that approximated a business association; there was a Hoodoo on Andrew Bacon besides which the terrors of jungle witchcraft were but the teasings of a girls' school. "Can I have a look at this marvel?" he finally asked.

"Certainly," came the ready, typically trusting answer. Walking across to a dusty lidded carton, Bacon fished out a crumpled, unblocked hat. "That's BEFORE it's been pressed in the hydraulic machine," he said, significantly. For steam pressure always increases lustre.

Taking the hat in his hand, the manufacturer carressed it with critical, knowledgeable fingers. The immediate glint in his eye, eloquently bespoke his opinion:

"This is a smasher 'Drew," he admitted. "You are to be congratulated, my lad . . . you seem as successful at your work as with the opposite sex, although I think the former will be to your better advantage." Beyond a sheepish grin Latimer gave no acknowledgment of the flattery.

"I suppose you would not like to tell me how it is done 'Drew?" Amos turned again to Bacon, but it was Bert who answered:

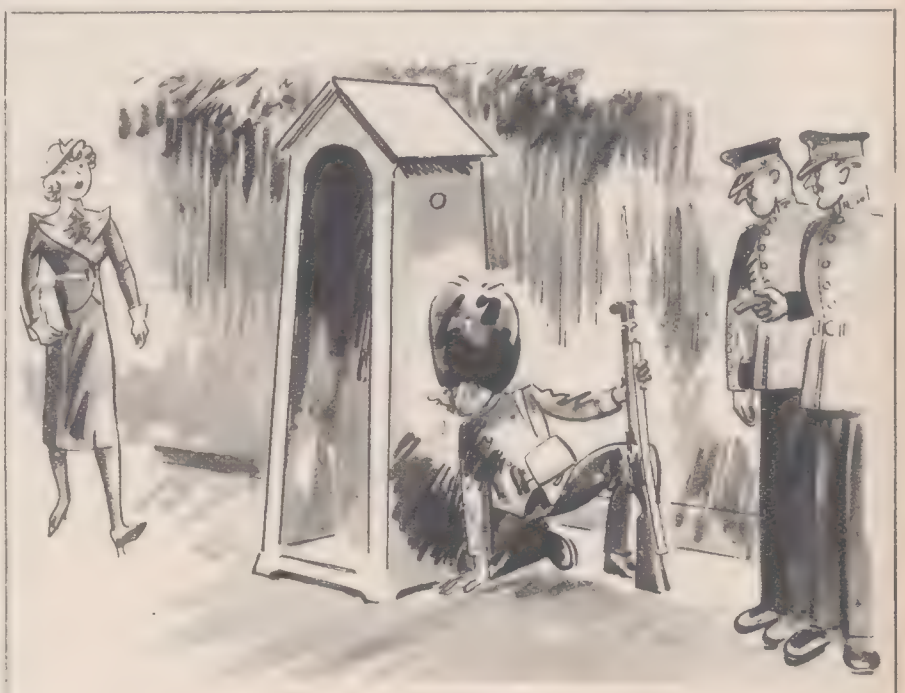
"No, he wouldn't," he said. "'Cause why . . 'Cause 'e don't know. Nobody but me does and I want some of the jam."

There was reason in this attitude. Benn, himself, kept skilled men especially to experiment. They were paid regular weekly wages in and out of season, and anything they evolved automatically became the property of the firm. Bacon, on the other hand, was not in so fortunate a financial position; his workers were paid on a piecework basis and a sudden rush on a new finish, would put little more into the discoverer's pocket than if he had kept to ordinary routine.

"Can't say that I blame you." Amos admitted the justice of Latimer's atti- He pondered a moment. "I think we could easily come to a satisfactory arrangement where that is concerned, once your employer and myself come to terms," he said. "Although it is even more of a pity now that there is this trouble over your love affairs. But for that, you could come along to my place for the time that this finish is likely to last. As it is there is certainly not room for both yourself and those two misguided girls on one and the same firm. However, I'll just have a private word with Mr. Bacon and then we two will talk business."

It did not take long to fix up with the good natured Andrew; indeed, anybody with less rigid principles than Amos Benn would have been able to rob him openly. As it was, a just and equitable arrangement was made whereby Bacon was to take a proportion of the profits on all hats of

(*please turn to page* 42)



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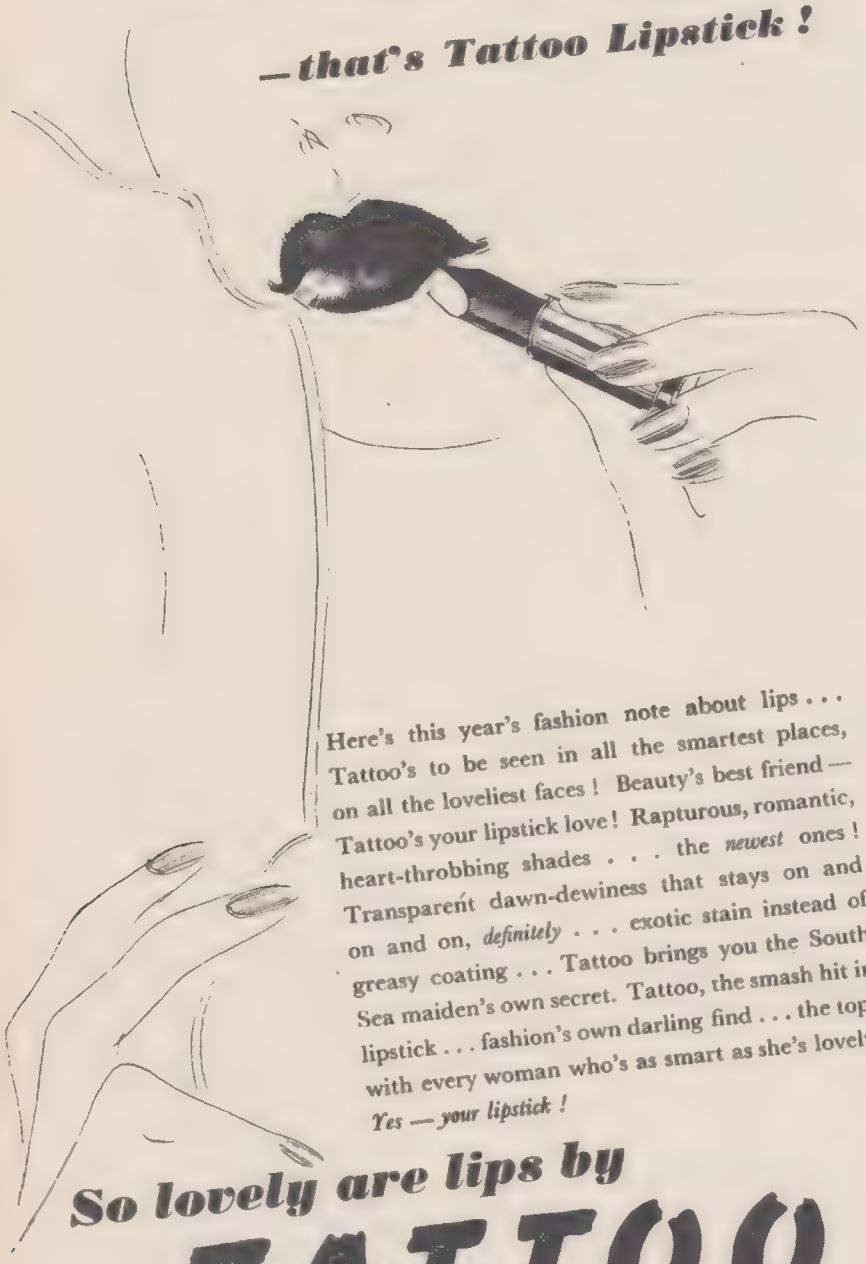

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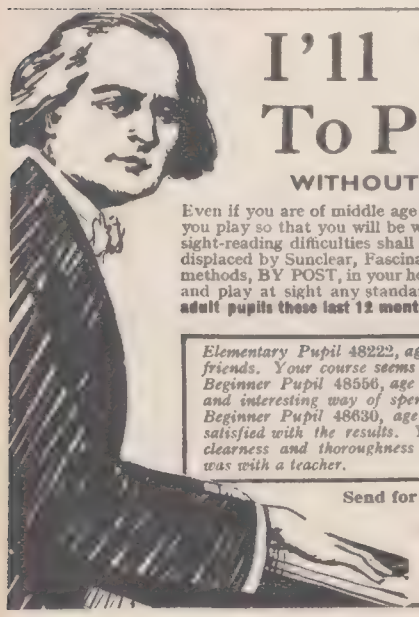

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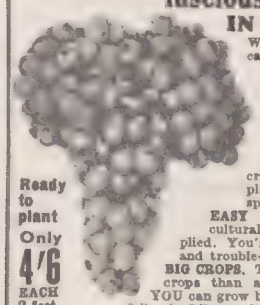

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the new process manufactured by Benn and Son and, as between these two old friends no legal documents were necessary, the bargain was sealed on a firm handshake, more binding than any written bond. Meantime, Mr. Latimer, himself, had been doing a bit of thinking in another direction.

He made this plain as soon as Amos had also come to agreeable terms over the polishing, by which he was assured of an exceptionally high rate of pay and continuous work, so long as the new finish remained a monopoly.

"I've come to a decision over Hilda and Mabel, Mr. Benn," he said. "One that I think will straighten things out all round."

"That's good," said Benn. "Which of the young ladies have you decided to honour with your affections?"

"Neither of 'em. Local girls are too stuck up and expect too much of a fellow. I've found this out since I've known Bertha, and it's her that I shall get engaged to. I'll tell her so on Friday night—when I have an appointment to go with her and her brother and his young lady to the pictures. I'll drop a line to the other two to tell them the news to-morrow."

For a moment Amos gazed at the speaker with something approaching awe. There was a Sultan-like lordliness about Bert's dispensation of his favours that awoke what was almost a tinge of envy in the heart of the older man, himself more than a little hen-pecked over many long years.

"As you think best," he said. "Your plan will certainly relieve the situation where I am concerned. If I know anything of feminine nature, these two girls will now become firm friends, with you as the object of a mutual hatred. However, I don't suppose that will worry you?" Latimer being emphatically reassuring on that point, it was arranged that he should at once set to work to prepare special sample hoods for the skilled hands of Lucelle to turn into models ready for immediate submission to the buyers.

Returning to his own factory, Amos found that things had not improved in his absence. As he had feared, the other girls had taken sides. Some, supporting the indignant Hilda, who, as first in the field, claimed squatter's rights, declared that Mabel ought to be ashamed of herself; others, opinioning that what one could not hold one was not entitled to possess, loudly declaimed that . . . all being fair in love . . . let the best girl win. Between the two factions work had practically come to a standstill; a shrill crescendo of recriminative voices substituting the normal low hum of peaceful industry.

Lucelle, almost tearful and completely at her wits end, received her employer's news with undisguised thankfulness, although she had one or two typically feminine observations to make about cynical young men who trifled lightly with the affections of her own down-trodden sex. "In any case, it seems to me that both girls will be well rid of a thoroughly bad penny," she snapped, adding: "the only person I'm sorry for is this Bertha girl; it's a pity she doesn't know what she is letting herself in for."

"Not for us to interfere," said Amos. "Although, personally, I quite agree with you. However, from one or two things that Bert let slip about her, including the colour of her hair, I should imagine her capable of taking care of herself. In the end it may be Latimer himself who will have most cause for regret. Life often works out that way."

The first set of samples on the new finish had already been rushed through and only needed trimming, by the time that Phillip, Benn's son and junior partner, returned from the city.

"By jove!" enthused the younger man, after a swift appraisement, "we've struck oil here. Who's been responsible for this bit of luck?"

"Not one of our own staff, unfortunately," sighed Amos. Briefly he told his son of his visit to Bacon and the events that had preceded it. "This is good for a two month's run at least," he concluded, as he turned the sample lovingly in his hands. "It is doubtful if our rivals will get on to it before then, although they are, of course, bound to do so sooner or later. In the meantime we shall have scooped the cream from the market."

"I don't like it," said Phillip, unexpectedly.

Amos raised surprised eyebrows. "But you just said that you did," he remonstrated.

"I don't mean the finish. That's beyond criticism. I mean that I don't like Bacon being in it."

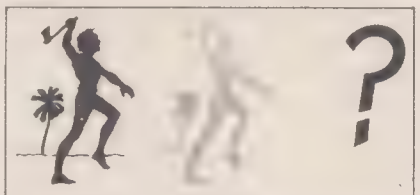
For a moment, misunderstanding his son's outlook, "That's not like you, my boy," said Amos. "Hang it all, you would not have had me rob the fellow; actually it was kind of him to approach me first, with all the town to choose from. Any of the others would have jumped at coming in on the same terms."

"You've got me altogether wrong," answered Phillip. "I don't grudge him a penny of the money he makes out of the deal. Quite the contrary, in fact . . . the more for him—the more for us. What I mean is that I am frightened to death of anything with which Andrew has anything to do; he is indubitably the world's champion Jonah."

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Amos. "This can't go wrong. In any case it's not even his own invention. He only comes into the picture as the employer of Bert Latimer."

"That's another thing I don't like," persisted Phillip. "We are being left too much in the hands of that beggar. And if he shows us as much fidelity as he does his lady friends, we are in for a pretty thin time. However, I will of course do my best with the samples. They should sell like hot cakes. So here's hoping that for once the Bacon Hoodoo is taking a well earned holiday."

Phillip, as he had anticipated, found the new finish go with a bang; returning early from his first sales trip with an order book so loaded that he had become afraid of taking more until he saw how things in general were going to develop. At first



GOING! GOING! GONE!
You'll be amazed and amused by the unusual story "THIN AIR" by DUDLEY HOYS.
—NEXT WEEK

it appeared that there would be no snags beyond the inevitable worries that perpetually attach to the making of hats and without which the manufacturer would feel lonely and unhappy.

Bert Latimer had kept his word about writing to his two love-stricken admirers, and what the letters . . . duplicated in all but names . . . lacked in excellence of literary composition, they more than made up in curt lucidity. They also had the effect reserved for all great literature, in that they stirred the emotions of their readers to the uttermost depths; making, as Amos had rightly foretold, fast friends out of deadly enemies. They also turned two gay young girls into uncompromising man-haters. At least, temporarily. It was out of a mighty oath of vengeance sworn between the two disillusioned ones, that Bacon's uncomfortable imp was enabled to get to work.

Benn heard the news early on the Saturday morning from the tongue of Andrew, himself.

Instead of the pile of beautifully polished hoods that the manufacturer had been hopefully expecting, it was the barren-handed, woebegone face of his friend that appeared, almost furtively thrust round his office door:

"What's up, 'Drew?" asked Benn, with a sinking heart. He had no need to be told that something was very badly "up."

"It's Bert Latimer," mourned Bacon. "He's in hospital."

"Good heavens," groaned the questioner. "And here are we knee deep in orders and only he knows the secret of the process. What has happened? Has he had an accident?"

"Worse than that . . . it's the Stockport Slasher."

Benn took a deep breath. "I wish to blazes you would learn not to talk in riddles, 'Drew," he complained. "Who and what is the 'Stockport Slasher' as you call him, and what the dooce has he to do with Latimer, anyway?"

"He's the ten stone champion of Stockport. Also, he is Bertha's brother."

"Oh, I see." Never dense, Amos could guess pretty well what was coming. "I thought that young fool was riding for a fall. How and what, happened?" he said resignedly.

"Bert, as he told us he was going to do, went with his new girl to the pictures last evening in company with her brother and HIS sweetheart . . . the whole family seem to have made this town their new home . . . everything, as far as I could get out of all that's left of Latimer, went swimmingly until they came out of the cinema, when alas, they found Bert's two old flames waiting for them.

"You don't need to be told what the tongues of two girls, who consider themselves to have been badly let down, can be like, and this Slasher fellow, who seems a hasty individual at the best of times, evidently came to the conclusion that his sister was included in the general debacle. Anyhow, he acted on that assumption before Bert had a chance to explain and now, as I said, Latimer's in the hospital."

"Tcth!" Benn sucked his teeth, peevishly. "We must do something," he said, desperately. "We shall have to get him to show us how to polish those hats somehow, if he only does one it will be enough."

"He couldn't even polish his nails," mourned Bacon. "When I left him he was just about breathing and that's all." The speaker looked round in surprise as, heralded by a smart tap, the door opened and disclosed the broad, powerful shoulders of a stocky individual whose bullet head was crowned with stubbly, vivid red hair.

"What do you want?" It was Amos who asked the question.

"Which is Mr. Bacon?" inquired the visitor. "'Corse I got summat to say to him."

"That's me?" answered Andrew, raising surprised eyebrows.

"Your gal told me that I'd find you here," agreed the newcomer, pugnaciously. "Well, my name's Jack Thomson, better known as the 'Stockport Slasher.'"

Bacon was the mildest of men as a rule, but at this information his indignation flared high. "Then you ought to be ashamed of yourself for making such a brutal attack on one of my workmen. . . ." he began, but the other coarsely interrupted:

"Ashamed nothing. He only got what was coming to him and if he'd stood up longer he'd a got more, the dirty tike."

"Apart from your own private vendettas, I suppose you realise that you have seriously inconvenienced both this gentleman and myself." It was Amos who broke into the conversation.

Immediately recognising and bowing to the stronger personality: "I'm sorry, sir, but it was about that that I came to see you." The speaker's tone took on a more conciliatory note. "You see, I know all about this new finish of that Latimer swine. It was me who told him how to do it."

At the words, a niggling memory in the brain of the manufacturer flamed into illumination. The district from which the pugnacious one came was as much famed for the manufacture of men's felt hats as their own for the making of ladies' headgear. In both processes a polishing wheel is used in the final manufacture, but whereas nothing is too garish for the wear of the fair sex, a man's hat with a lustrous, rainbow effect, would be considered eccentric to the point of criminality.

"Yes," continued the speaker, "I was fooling about with a hood for my girl, just before we came south, when I got the idea. Of course, it was no good to the people I was working for, but when this Latimer chap came a'courting my sister, I, being a good natured fool, told him how to do it. He said it 'ud do him a good turn. I did him another last night." he concluded, vindictively.

"And now you are willing to show us how it is done?" queried Amos, eagerly.

"Better 'un that. I'll come and do it for you," offered the Slasher. "I came down here to work in the engineering, but I've had enough of that and I'd like to get back at my old game."

"But what will Bert Latimer say to that?" asked Bacon.

"Whatever it is, he can say it to me" grinned the Stockport Slasher. ". . . 'nd I don't think it will take him long to say it." Having summed up his men, he winked at Amos, who unashamedly winked back.

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YOU SHALL SEE YOUR SKIN DISEASE CLEARING UP BY JUNE 24 * OR THE TRIAL TREATMENT SHALL COST YOU NOTHING

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A FEW MONTHS AGO scarcely anyone would have been imprudent enough to give you a definite guaranteed undertaking that you would see your skin trouble clearing up or not be one penny out of pocket for a 14 days' treatment. You could buy various commonly accepted remedies and you could take various well-defined treatments. Probably you have done so already. But the fact that YOU, in common with so many thousands of others, continue to suffer from dreadful skin afflictions, even after having tried every modern ointment, lotion, powder, ray treatment or diet, is sufficient proof that such methods are by no means certain.

But now there is a treatment that IS. And the undertaking means every word it says—that you shall receive **proof** on your own body for your own eyes to see and your own hands to touch—firm, healthy and smooth skin again, where now it is diseased, spotted, scabbed or ulcerated. And you will see your skin trouble clearing up by June 24th or **the trial treatment shall not cost you a penny.**

One fact and one fact only has made this possible—and that is the remarkable discovery by one of Germany's leading research chemists of a way of making sulphur **soluble and assimilable by the blood.** Ask any doctor what **assimilable** sulphur means and he will tell you it is something that medical research workers have been striving to find for the last 100 years. He will tell you they have long believed such a form of sulphur could end almost any and every type of skin suffering. And he will tell you why.

Sulphur has within itself the power to do three things:

(1) It is the greatest blood purifier known and has the power to cast out all the varying blood impurities that now erupt to the surface of the skin in the form of sores, rashes, boils and acne.

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(3) It is the secret of cell health, and can heal open ulcerated conditions and accelerate the building of new healthy skin cells.

But—and it is a big "but"—till now not one-thousandth part of this **power** has been available to YOU. Why? Because ordinary sulphur, whether in tablet, ointment, or powder, cannot be assimilated by the blood except in the minutest quantities. Indeed, experts have shown that even if it were possible for you to eat a **hundredweight** of ordinary sulphur, **less than a saltspoonful would be absorbed.**

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A few months ago under the name of "Sibsul" Assimilable Sulphur, the first supplies of the new treatment were brought to Britain. And though doctors had always predicted outstanding results, though their medical knowledge had shown them what to expect, the immediate effects of "Sibsul" surpassed all medical optimism. Most amazing of all is the speed of recovery. The most obvious day-to-day improvement is visible in many cases. Burning irritation ends almost at once. Weeping conditions dry up. Dreadful eruptions cease. And ulcers are seen to heal and beautiful new skin speedily forms.

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What you have to do is explained in a book entitled, "**The Guaranteed Way to End Your Skin Troubles for Good.**" There is no obligation for you to act upon its information if you do not care to, but if you are in earnest to end your suffering it will bring you more than hope, more than promises, but will definitely tell you how you can see the clearing up of your skin trouble by June 24th, **or not be one penny out of pocket for the trial treatment.** A copy will be sent to you quite free on receipt of the Application Form below.

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FREE Sample from Dept. 31, Cephos, Ltd., Blackburn.

PLEASURE BEFORE BUSINESS

(Continued from page 10)

fishing downstream, feeling plenty sorry for myself.

You know, Joe, any stream that'll produce trout is a nice place to be, but this Boardman is a honey. I stood there wishing I could appreciate all of it when I saw the first of these big bugs.

He was away high, flying upstream; a great, outsized May fly. Then I saw two more. Then six or seven. In just a minute or two that flight was a cloud. I'm not stretching things by a hair when I say it looked like a snowstorm, Joe. Millions of flies; billions of 'em, all scooting upstream as if the devil were after them. It made my heart whang my ribs just to see it.

Still nothing doing on the stream, understand. Not a fish feeding. Not a sound except the brawl of the riffle above me. Then I saw one of those flies struggling on the water. Mated, laid eggs, died, see? Just fish food.

And the fish, mister, began to feed!

Get it, now: One minute, a peaceful, serene evening with not a sign of a fish; the next, that water's churning in a dozen places and no one of 'em beyond casting distance. I picked out one under the alders.

The mosquitoes were terrible. I heard Wellenburg call to Lola to shut the car windows and keep 'em out. Daylight had gone while I worked on that first trout and a moon was riding high.

You see, with all those flies, your lure has a lot of competition. The only thing to do is to keep pecking. I kept my fly over this old baby for a straight hour, trying for the one chance in a million, and I got it.

Excuse me if I pant a little. He took it and settled to the bottom and just sat there. I'll bet he sat there for five seconds and I couldn't move him. It seemed like an hour. And when he started, it was like the whole bottom of the river moving.

He went straight across the current but luck or destiny or something was with me. He didn't get clear to his hide, see. He changed his mind half way to the deep pool where he probably kept house, and started upstream.

He made a run towards the other bank and I gave him the butt with everything I had, from wrist to the soles of my feet, and he bored into the current again.

He took me around the bend and I could see Wellenburg above this noisy riffle. My fish sulked and I took line. He rushed and I gave it back. He hesitated and I stripped in. He was in shallow water by then, and I horsed him as hard as I could.

I was afraid he'd start for the outside of that bend, where the water was swift and deep, but he didn't. He was pretty groggy, and I rested a minute myself, just holding him.

"What's the matter?" I heard Lola call, and looked up. Her dad was standing in the middle of the river, back towards me, rod under one arm, head bent.

"Dope in my eye," he said, sort of muffled, and dug for a handkerchief.

I was moving upstream then, good and slow, raring back on my fish every step or two. I was almost to where the alders quit at the open stretch where Wellenburg stood. My fish was out of the shadows, half on his side. There he was, right on a shin-deep riffle with only a little line out. I had some foolish notion that if I could kill him single-handed Wellenburg might think I was such a wonder that we'd be chums. Just a passing notion. But before it passed I had my net ready. I gave him a twist, made a dab and there he was!

There he was, Joe, safe in my deep net, the biggest fish I'd ever landed, the biggest brown I'd ever seen.

Here's the screwy part. As I lifted him I saw a loose leader dangling across my net. First I thought it was mine and that the hook had come out when I gave slack. But it wasn't mine. It was Wellenburg's, see? He was getting mosquito dope out of his eyes and his line was trailing on the current. He wasn't much over forty feet from me, but his back was downstream and he hadn't heard me sloshing around on account of the riffles.

It was one of those things, Joe. It was pure inspiration.

I got my own hook out of that brown's jaw. I drove Wellenburg's in, holding the fish in the net against my side with my left arm. I shook so that I stabbed myself twice. I'd just got that hook set when Wellenburg began putting away his handkerchief.

I let that big baby back into the water. I eased the mesh away from him and backed for the alder shadows, only a couple of steps behind me. He just lay there fanning and opening and shutting his mouth. He never made a move for maybe half a minute. He didn't even drift with the current to take the slack out of that line.

He didn't move until Wellenburg began stripping in line to go on fishing.

Did that old bald bozo let out a yip? I mean, he opened his mouth and screeched.

"Hi!" he yelled. "Hi, Lola!" he yelled. "I'm into a heavy one!"

I was getting around the bend. I'd just made it when I heard the most terrible sound that ever came from a human throat.

He'd taken a Brodie, see? He'd slipped on a slick stone and gone flat and his rod had broken square off at the tip joint.

His scream scared me. Actually, I didn't know what had happened, but when he let out that awful yell I stepped out where I could see and where he could see me. He was getting up on his knees, holding his rod in both hands.

"Come on, no hanky-panky business," says Tommy Handley, looking through the holey handkerchief, "let's get on with choosing our Ideal Concert Party."

Make sure you follow his advice and enter at once for the "Daily Herald" great new £2,500 Ideal Concert Party Competition with its huge First Prize of £2,000. Entry forms appear in the "Daily Herald" each day.

"Net him!" he choked, seeing me. "Get my fish!" he croaked. "My rod's gone!"

I had a flashlight and got it on the fish. He was all in, of course, but Wellenburg didn't know that. I slipped the net under him and lit straight for the bank. I wasn't taking any chances with that trout. I wanted dry land under him for keeps.

Well, Lola had followed along the bank, but when she saw me she didn't have anything to say. She put an arm around her father and made a great fuss, but she didn't even seem to notice me. I didn't care. Not then, you better believe!

We dressed the fish under his car's headlights, and I had a little spring scale in my pocket and we weighted him. Six pounds and three ounces, Joe.

"Six and three," I said to Wellenburg.

"Six and three," he said, sort of husky, and his Adam's apple jumped. "I wonder what a certain party will think of that!" he said to Lola. "How's that going to look in the show window early in the morning?" he said to her.

Then he gave me a close look. "I don't believe I know you," he said.

"Well, sir, my name's Bogle," I said. "Henry Bogle. I'm with Ajax Preserving," I said, risking everything then and there. "I was in your office this morning."

"Oh, yes," he said, and my heart skipped a beat because he sounded as if it was a pleasant recollection. "Oh, yes!" he said "Ajax Preserving . . . maraschino man," he said. He gave me a good long look. Maybe it didn't hold for many seconds, Joe, but I swear it was the longest look I've ever had to take. "I still stand by what I said about your product," he said, and my heart hit my heels. "But," he said, slowlike, "I'm not blind to a man's obligations, as you'll see," he said. "It was necessary that I kill a fish about this size. No smaller," he said. "Without you, and my rod broken, I never could have landed him.

"My daughter and I," he said, "eat crackers and milk after night fishing. If you can come to my home," he said, "we'll discuss the tonnage you need while we eat."

Well, Joe, there you are! I was fired, but I signed the contract for two thousand barrels at seven cents a pound in the name of Ajax. Not until after we'd made a profile of the fish, though. Not until after I'd eaten crackers and milk on the kitchen table, just like a boy who'd grown up in their neighbourhood.

There's something about seeing a girl like Lola in an apron that gets you. That is, it would if your mind was free. It kind of got me, down underneath, but it couldn't get to the surface of my feelings, if you understand. All I was living for was to take that contract back to J. B. and throw it in his face, and get off my chest all the things that had piled up there for three years.

And I knew Lola was acting funny, too. Didn't look at me much. Seemed kind of red and flustered. Once I thought I heard her kind of choke back a laugh when she went into another room with the fish profile, but when you've lived for one thing as long as I had, you don't have any curiosity for anything else at the moment.

I got out as soon as I could. I began to run, but Lola stopped me.

"Mr. Bogle!" she called. "Didn't you drop this?" she said and came down the steps.

"Here!" she whispered. "I made two profiles!" "You deserve one, I saw you net him the first time! You must be smart," she said. "We fish the same stretch every evening," she said, "and if you're as wise as you seem to be, that word is sufficient!"

Joe, it's a shame not to have your mind free at a time like that, but I just mumbled something about to-night and beat it. I came through red lights and all to get here in a hurry.

J. B. was in bed with a wet towel over his head. He threw it off when I walked in, waving the contract at him.

"I've been fishing," I said, "and caught what Ajax needs," I said, trying to be sarcastic and not doing so well because I was pretty emotional over what it meant to the firm right then.

He grabbed the contract and read it. "How'd you manage this?" he snapped.

"I helped Wellenburg catch a fish," I said. "I put pleasure before business," I said, "and now I've got something to say to you!"

But he just grabbed the 'phone and put in a call for Mr. Lingle's house.

Now, you can't bawl a guy out unless he listens. It just won't work, Joe. All I could do was wait for him to get through.

"This's J. B.," he yelled. . . . "Got a couple things, one's pleasure, the other's business. We got them cherries," he said. . . . "Yeah. Sure. . . . Two thousand. Bogle done it," he said. "What? . . . Oh, some damn foolishness about fishin'," he said.

"That's th' pleasure part," he said. "Here's th' business: This kid'll do. Told you three years back when you started lookin' for a new branch staff that if he could stand me a while he'd get along anywhere. . . . Yeah. Sure. What it takes. Won't even stay fired. Got a little stirred up to-day and made a pass at firin' him, but afterwards he went and got them cherries I couldn't touch. . . ."

Well, he said more, but my ears buzzed. I didn't more than half come to when he jerked open my door.

"You know the time?" he yelled. "Past midnight!" he yelled. "We got a hard day to-morrow, 'n if you're goin' to spend half your nights fishin' how're you goin' to work? Git!"

So there you are, Joe. What does a guy say or do? He says nothing and works his head off.

It's time I was up the creek meeting the Wellenburgs. Fact is, it's past time, when a girl like Lola's waiting. But J. B. don't feel so hot yet. Those sick headaches of his are terrible. I want to stick around until he gets settled for the night. Maybe, could do something for the old boy. . .

"Give Me Your Measure and I'll Prove in the First 7 Days You Can Have a Body Like Mine!"

— Charles Atlas

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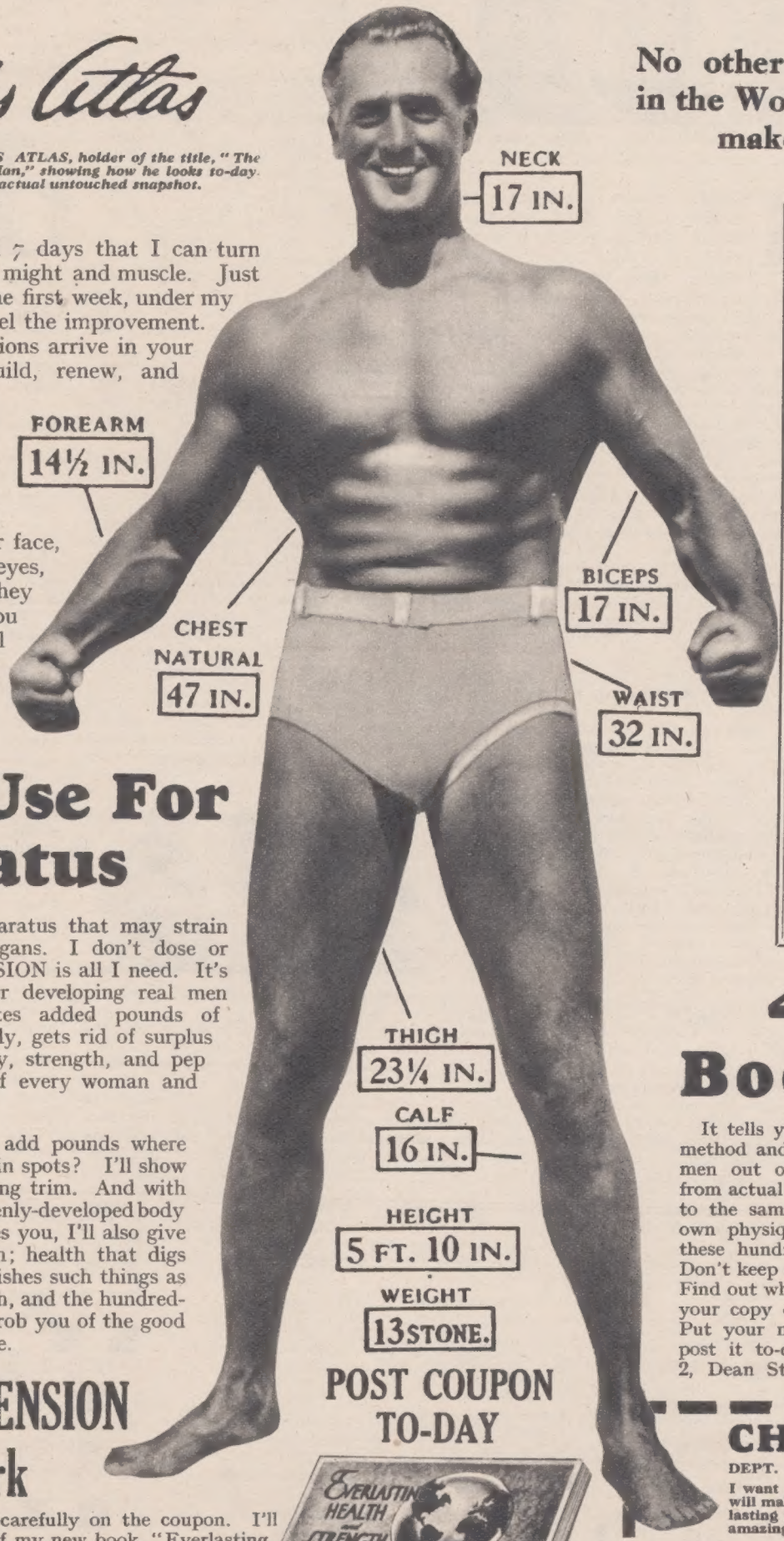


I'LL give you PROOF in 7 days that I can turn you, too, into a man of might and muscle. Just think of it! Right in the first week, under my guidance, you will see and feel the improvement. Then, as my weekly instructions arrive in your home, you continue to rebuild, renew, and "overhaul" your body. By the end of three months you are the owner of a powerful body that you will be proud to display anywhere, any time! People will notice the ruddy glow of health in your face, the sparkle in your clear eyes, your broad shoulders, and they will seek your company. You will be the fellow who will walk off with the prettiest girl and the best job, while the others wonder how you did it.

I've No Use For Apparatus

I haven't any need for apparatus that may strain your heart and other vital organs. I don't dose or doctor you. DYNAMIC TENSION is all I need. It's the natural, tested method for developing real men inside and out. It distributes added pounds of powerful muscles over your body, gets rid of surplus fat, and gives you the vitality, strength, and pep that win you the admiration of every woman and the respect of any man.

Are you under-weight? I'll add pounds where they are needed! Are you fat in spots? I'll show you how to pare down to fighting trim. And with the big muscles and powerful, evenly-developed body that my method so quickly gives you, I'll also give you through-and-through health; health that digs down into your system and banishes such things as constipation, pimples, bad breath, and the hundred-and-one similar conditions that rob you of the good times and the good things of life.

Let DYNAMIC TENSION Do The Work

Write your name and address carefully on the coupon. I'll send you absolutely free a copy of my new book, "Everlasting Health and Strength." It reveals the secrets of DYNAMIC TENSION that changed me from a 7-stone, flat-chested weakling into a husky fellow who won the title, "The World's Most Perfectly Developed Man," against all comers! And it shows how I can build you into an "Atlas" champion the same way.

POST COUPON TO-DAY

CHOSEN FOR POLICE FROM 75 CANDIDATES

"You promised to make a man out of me, and you did. I have gained 5 in. on my chest (normal), 5 in. on biceps, 2 in. on neck, and have gained 40 lbs. in weight. I am now able to enjoy life to the full and face it with every confidence, and the Police Chief of —— has agreed to take me on as a Police Officer out of 75 applicants. Thank you for helping me develop my body into a masterpiece."—P. J. R.

GAINED 18 LBS.

"My chest has improved beyond all expectations, as have my arms, and I have gained 18 lbs. in weight."—R. W. G., Chelmsford.

CONSTIPATION OVERCOME

"Most delighted with results after 3 weeks. Am putting on weight and constipation overcome, and in every way I feel better."—W. B., Rotherham.

PHYSIQUE PRAISED BY ARMY DOCTOR

"A Territorial Army doctor described me as being in perfect health, congratulated me on my massive build and marvellous proportions. At the beginning of your course I weighed 10 stone, chest (normal) 36 in., biceps 11½ in. Now weigh 11 stone, chest (normal) 42 in., biceps 13¼ in. Constipation, headaches and giddiness now all gone, thanks to you."—E. S., Sunningdale, Berks.

48-Page Book FREE

It tells you all about my DYNAMIC TENSION method and what it has done to make big-muscled men out of run-down specimens. It shows you, from actual photos, how I have developed my pupils to the same perfectly balanced proportions of my own physique. What my system did for me and these hundreds of others it can do for you, too. Don't keep on being only half the man you CAN be! Find out what I can do for you. Where shall I send your copy of "Everlasting Health and Strength"? Put your name and address on the coupon and post it to-day. CHARLES ATLAS, Dept. 14/F, 2, Dean Street, London, W.1.

CHARLES ATLAS

DEPT. 14/F, 2, DEAN STREET, LONDON, W.1.

I want proof that your system of DYNAMIC TENSION will make a New Man of me. Send me your book, "Everlasting Health and Strength," FREE, and details of your amazing 7-DAY TRIAL OFFER.

NAME.....

(PLEASE PRINT OR WRITE CLEARLY)

ADDRESS.....

.....

FRENCH—SPANISH GERMAN—ITALIAN

(Also Courses in Afrikaans and Urdu)

Learned in Six Months by New Pelman Method

"I began to study with no previous knowledge, and I am now in a position to enjoy reading French newspapers and books.

"What has appealed to me most in connection with your method of teaching is the ease with which the knowledge is acquired and its retention in the mind without any undue concentration." (U.151.)

THIS letter is typical of thousands received from readers who are learning French, German, Italian and Spanish by the new Pelman method, which is revolutionising language teaching.

This wonderful new method enables you to learn French in French, Spanish in Spanish, German in German and Italian in Italian. It enables you to learn a language as a Spaniard, Italian, Frenchman or German learns it. There is no translation from one language into another. It enables you to think in the particular language in question.

It thus enables you to speak without that hesitation which arises from the habit of mentally translating English phrases into their foreign equivalents.

There are no vocabularies to be memorised. You learn the words you need by using them and so that they stay in your mind without effort.

Grammatical Difficulties Eliminated

Grammatical complexities are eliminated. You pick up the grammar almost unconsciously as you go along. This makes the new method extremely interesting. The usual boredom of learning a Foreign Language is entirely eliminated. There are no classes to attend. The whole of the instruction is given through the post.

The Pelman method of learning languages is explained in four little books, one for each language :

FRENCH, SPANISH, GERMAN, ITALIAN.

State which book you want and it will be sent to you by return, together with a specimen lesson, free and post free. Write or call to-day.

PELMAN INSTITUTE,
33, Languages House,
Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.1.

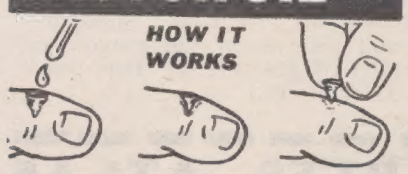
TO AVOID FLATULENCE

AND PAIN AFTER MEALS

You get burning pain and distressing wind after meals because your stomach is always too acid. Food can't digest and your stomach is tortured in the attempt. Why endure this mealtime misery? 'Milk of Magnesia' Tablets will stop it this very day. They relieve acidity and sweeten a sour stomach at once. The stomach starts digesting your food right away and finishes its work with perfect ease. You feel nothing—no heartburn, no flatulence, not a twinge of your old stomach pain. If you suffer from acute gastric attacks, 'Milk of Magnesia' brand Tablets will stop them in five minutes. Try them to-day ! Neat flat tins for the pocket, 6d. and 1/-. Also family sizes, 2/- and 3/6. Of all chemists.

'Milk of Magnesia' is the trade mark of Phillips' preparation of Magnesia.

CORNS REMOVED WITH CASTOR OIL



A few drops curb pain instantly. Corn soon starts to shrivel up. Out comes corn, "root" and all.

Say goodbye to dangerous razors and clumsy cornpads. A new liquid called NOXACORN relieves pain in 60 seconds. Dries up the worst corn or callous. Contains 6 ingredients, including pure castor oil, iodine and camphor. Absolutely safe. Easy directions in package. 1/6 bottle saves untold misery. Money refunded if it fails to remove your corn, callous or warts. At Boots, Timothy Whites, Taylors and all chemists.

NOXACORN

NEXT WEEK

DUDLEY HOYS sees invisible guides

THERE came a time when even Sergeant Jan Groll, of the South African police, a man who was devoted to wide open spaces, had to admit that deserts didn't really help detectives.

At the time he was pursuing a horse-faced Portuguese, a wicked uncle with a roving disposition who was known as Izzy da Gruza before he took to cutting throats for a living in Lisbon, Paris and Rome.

But it was not entirely Izzy's fault that Sergeant Jan began to feel so bad about deserts. For his troubles dated back only to the time he was asked to combine the guiding of a flying honeymoon couple, with a desire to see bushmen and other forms of primitive fauna, with the tracking of Izzy.

He had a feeling, somehow, that even though they had the whole desert to play in, things were likely to get mixed up. And how right he was ! "Deserts Don't Help Detectives" is by William J. Neidig.

Corland, the American, was striding up the mountain, revelling in the crunch of snow beneath the nails of his climbing boots and thinking eagerly of the coffee and bacon that were to be his reward when he reached the summit. Then his guides vanished.

Suddenly their footprints in the snow stopped. Two men gone from the face of the mountain leaving nothing to show they had been there at all but their tracks.

No crevasses. No clouds. Just a vanishing trick several thousand feet up from nowhere. Well, it was enough to spoil even Corland's appetite.

Anyway, see if you can find the invisible guides in "Leaving No Evidence," by Dudley Hoys.

Will Scott, continuing the stories of the adventures that overtook the nine-fifteen, explains the mysterious power possessed by the dining car attendants' ring, and Dale Collins lets you in on another of the secrets uncovered when Old Joe, the temporary postman, confiscated the last post one night.

YOU'RE TELLING US !

YOU'RE TELLING US ! Half a guinea is paid for each letter or quotation printed on this page. Address: "Readers' Letters." "Passing Show," 93 Long Acre, London, W.C.2. Please state whether Mr., Mrs., or Miss

WE had difficulty during the afternoon of the day before yesterday in maintaining the calm, unruffled manner with which we are always trying to convince the world that we are far too busy thinking, to be disturbed by such mundane trifles as income-tax forms, tailor's bills, rates, summonses, and the weakening protests of the charlady against our leaving some of your letters where she can read them.

Having nowhere to sit, we were doing our best to take a weight off our feet without actually upsetting the structural arrangements of the garage, when the mechanic, whose dexterity in removing the wheel of a German car had made us feel so very thoughtful, suddenly turned around and handed us the cap of the hub.

"See that !" he said, before we were properly awake again. "Well, it's a tin hat. A little moulding there and there, and what have you but the nattiest, latest thing in headpieces for the modern man-o'-war? Probably turn 'em out by the million in a few hours. Now think that out."

As though we could, when our thoughts were elsewhere; but we couldn't help returning to the problem, especially when Mr. T. P. House, of High Holborn, London, W.C.1, wrote to tell us about a German who tried to acquire in typical Nazi manner a carriage for the latest addition to his family.

"As the proud father-to-be was not very well off," says Mr. House, "he asked a friend, who worked in a perambulator factory, whether he could get him such a conveyance for nothing."

"'That is impossible, old lad,' said the friend. 'I could never smuggle a perambulator out of the works without being seen. But I can bring the thing out in parts—just a few at a time—and then you can assemble it yourself.'

"This was done, and three weeks later the friends met. The factory worker asked after the other's wife and inquired about the progress being made in assembling the perambulator. His friend pulled a long face.

"'It's no good, Hans,' said he. 'I have made three attempts to assemble those parts as a perambulator, but each time I got only a machine gun."

Now you think that out while we try to explain away an omelette of our own making. We commented not long ago, that young John Swindlehurst, a schoolboy reader, had, up to that time been the only person to notice that one of our authors likened the blue of the sky to a robin's egg.

All and sundry, including Uncle Joe, Allergic Alfred, Great Aunt Agatha and the Charlady have since pointed out that the story was American, that the egg of the American "robin" which is really a member of the thrush family, is blue, a lovely speckled blue, something like the egg of the English blackbird, that robin's-egg-blue is a colour to which they are devoted in the States, that Little Johnnie

should have known better, that we should have known better and that if we "don't get no better" the American robin, *turdus migratory*, will get us in the end.

We might reply by telling you all about the domestic habits of this Yankee redbreast, with which we have now become so well acquainted, but we'll play ball and say : "My, fancy those Americans (and Canadians, of course) doing that to the thrushes." Just as the Russian woman, on seeing a camel for the first time, said : "My, look what the Soviets have done to our horses."

Meanwhile, we feel rather like the gentleman known to Mr. W. H. Lewis, of Smethwick, Staffs, when he vowed to be careful about public speeches.

"He was proposing a toast at the annual dinner of his Old Boys' Association," says Mr. Lewis, "and he had embarked on a diverting but rather indelicate anecdote.

"In the full tide of his oratory he allowed his eyes to wander over the expectant faces of his audience—distinguished old boys to a man ! There were schoolmasters, civil servants, journalists, doctors and an admiral. And then his eyes stopped, arrested by the calm, saintly gaze of a well-known colonial bishop.

"The speaker realised, suddenly, how very indelicate was the end of his story. He began to stumble. But it was too late. He went on desperately, doing his best to postpone the end, inventing new details, repeating himself, hoping for a way out of the difficulty.

"His audience became restless. He could postpone the denouement no longer. At last he blurted it out, blushing furiously and averting his eyes from the venerable ecclesiastic. There was an embarrassed silence. Then someone laughed. He looked up. It was the bishop !"

And that is the story the bishop told the actress !

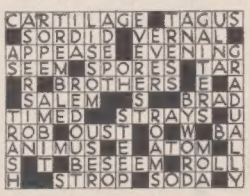
For Your Amusement

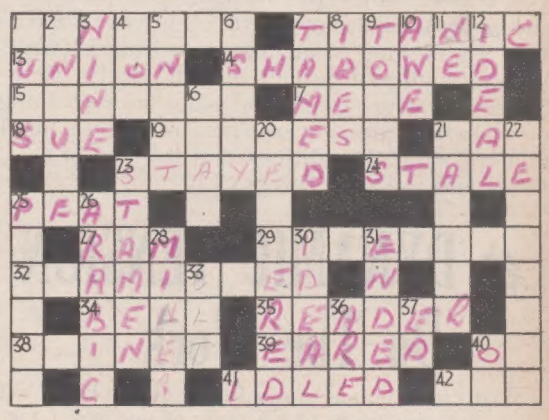
CLUES ACROSS

1. Male and fruit combine for command.
7. Enormous.
13. A constellation.
14. Had in sowed to be followed.
15. Poetic productions.
17. Suggests insignificance.
18. Make claim or application.
19. With least intervening space.
21. Reynard said to be so.
23. Did not depart.
24. Tales no longer new.
25. Tape for fuel of a kind.
27. In the zodiac.
29. Partly clergyman but manager on the whole.
32. Greatly charmed.
34. May produce a tintinnabulation.
35. You are one at the moment.
38. Instrument of other days.
39. May be asinine if long this.
40. Tail of 13 across.
41. Killed time.
42. Work unit.

CLUES DOWN

1. Vegetable growth.
2. Stir up.
3. Treble the number for this
4. Presumably learned.
5. Concerning something.
6. An attempt.
7. No longer wild.
8. Caesar was warned of these.
9. Legal wrongs.
10. Dread.
11. Half 3.
12. Should be a delight.
16. Rend asunder if sufficiently violent.
20. Delivered or presented.
21. He may put salt on tails.
22. Young animal.
23. Men sat in the flower.
25. There's comfort in this courtesy word.
26. Cab air for foreign tongue.
28. Underground workers.
30. Highest conceivable.
31. Brought to conclusion.
33. Last month for business correspondence.
36. I am, but you for this.
37. He passes matter for 35 across (abbreviation).
40. Opens 13 across.





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P.S. GOLDEN CIRCLE 11-6-38

Over 3,000,000 Families prefer the 30-Second Breakfast to any other!

YOU HAVE TO SAVE TIME in the morning when you've a husband and two kiddies to get off! Here's what Mrs. Nash of Bromley, Kent, says: "Kellogg's save me a lot. They need no cooking, so I've no pans to wash up. And the children prefer Kellogg's to anything else. Besides, they're so extra nourishing, they keep them well and strong and full of energy."

OUTDOOR SPORTS require plenty of energy — that's why Mr. A. Mitchell, Golf Professional of the Norwood Sports Club, S.E.19, sticks to Kellogg's Corn Flakes. He says "I get more energy out of Kellogg's . . . besides, they taste better than other cereals — they're *crisper* and they're easy on the family budget, too!"

"I GET A FLYING START from a 30-second breakfast of Kellogg's," says Mr. Hickson, taxi driver of Leeds. "It's always *ready* — there's no waiting for a meal to cook. And it's easy on my digestion, too." Workers all over the country are thrilled with the delicious new breakfast that never makes them late in the morning.

Twice as many people eat this crisper, more delicious cereal than any other brand. They love its tempting flavour and its energy-giving goodness.

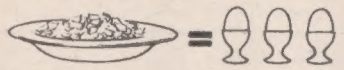
TODAY over 3,000,000 families are enjoying Kellogg's Corn Flakes — the delicious breakfast that takes only 30 seconds to serve.

And no wonder! Not only do Kellogg's save time and trouble for everyone — they're crisper, more delicious than other cereals. Sustaining, too. Actually there's more energy value in a bowl of Kellogg's with milk and sugar than in 3 boiled eggs.

Serve your family a delicious 30-second breakfast tomorrow! You'll find it an economy — only 5½d. for the big family packet. Serve it with milk and sugar — and fruit, too, if you like. Your grocer has Kellogg's.

Scientific Proof

of the great energy-giving power of the "30-SECOND BREAKFAST"



An analysis made at a leading dietetic laboratory shows that a bowlful of Kellogg's with milk and sugar has more energy value than 3 boiled eggs. That is why workers find the 30-second breakfast so sustaining.

30 SECONDS TO SERVE — KEEPS YOU GOING TILL LUNCH

Love flies out of the window when "LIGHTER" FAIR HAIR Turns Mousy

"Three years ago you said I had the loveliest hair in the world. You did! You know you did! And now you never even look at me. It's not MY fault that my hair's gone faded and mousy . . ."

But it *was* Joan's fault just the same. **Lighter** fair hair is the most glorious possession any woman can have, but it can't keep its light beauty unaided. To maintain its natural shimmering light loveliness you must use the one shampoo created specially for keeping fair hair light. Sta-blond not only cleans your hair and makes it soft and silky (any good shampoo will do that) but it does what no other shampoo even claims to do—**washes fair hair 2 to 4 shades lighter** and brings out the hidden golden highlights which spell breath-taking allure. **Prevents light fair hair from darkening.**

Sta-blond contains no injurious dyes or bleaches. What it *does* contain is the precious hair-vitamin "ViteF," which prevents brittleness and dandruff and stimulates the roots of the hair. Start using Sta-blond this very evening, and bring back to your hair that glamorous *lighter* golden beauty which it had when you were a child. It will keep light fair hair light always. **Now Sta-blond contains enough for two shampoos.**

AD-LAND ALPHABET

If you would like a fine 56-page Painting Book of the "Ad-land Alphabet" FREE, just send your name and address with 2d. in stamps to cover postage.

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To make every purchase
From a known Advertiser.

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'TEN MINUTES TO WAIT'

When this distinguished personage, known to all De Reszke smokers, sat for his portrait to Anna Zinkeisen, he filled in the 'rest' times with De Reszke Minors. They last a full ten minutes, and are made from the same choice tobacco as the more expensive cigarettes.

De Reszke MINORS, 15 for 6d., Plain, Cork, or Red Tips.

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